

DANGERhOX

Musical madness at high speed & top volume



John Scott G

DANGERhOX: Gods of the Hammer

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gnud

GOLOSIO NONTRADITIONAL
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In the first printing, photos for each chapter were mistakenly interchanged with *MENTAL! The Photographic Non-Realism of Joseph Medville Fook*. Our apologies for the error.

CHAPTER 1

THE EARLY YEARS



CECILE XAVIER (*Hox's Mother*)

My daughter was born and christened Hudson Olivia Xavier. Anything else that girl tells you is a lie.

HOX

When you're a child, you're fine with whatever name you've been given. You accept everyone's name, for that matter. But once you grow older, you may want to establish your own identity, and that might include your name. It's not necessarily the case that you want to distance yourself from people you feel are lacking in basic human emotions. Although that's true in my case.

CECILE XAVIER (*Hox's Mother*)

Maybe not everything she says is a lie, but a lot of it is. That girl's got an imagination on her, my lord.

HOX

H.H. Munro—Saki—wrote, “Romance at short notice was her specialty.” That applies to me. He also wrote, “A little

inaccuracy sometimes saves tons of explanation.” That applies to me. And he wrote, “He is one of those people who would be enormously improved by death.” Just make a gender change and that applies to my mother.

CECILE XAVIER (*Hox’s Mother*)

Some of her raving is... Oh, what’s the best way to put it? It’s far-fetched and outlandish, is what it is. My husband, the late Mr. Xavier, God rest his soul, and I used to try to beat sense into that girl, but she never would learn. She’s all about making up stories. I guess it’s just a part of that whole music and artsy thing.

CHARLES GEFAHR (*Yörn’s Father*)

I think Jimmy—that’s his name, James Walter Gefahr—turned into a fag.

YÖRN

Life is a muddled mixture of wonder and pain. Growing up involves a ton of information being presented to you or unloaded on you. Kids learn by example,

by experience, and by education. Only under the very best of circumstances do kids get to be around parents, teachers, siblings, and relatives who respect ideas, wisdom, facts, logic, and reason.

CHARLES GEFAHR (*Yörn's Father*)

I've always been open-minded. I figure if Jimmy wants to be a degenerate, well, I'm going to have to love him anyway. I love him like a son. That's the kind of man I am.

YÖRN

If someone learns how to learn, then life will always be more fulfilling than for those who close themselves off from knowledge. A big problem occurs when it becomes necessary to battle for the right to study, to absorb new ideas, to seek out universal truths. Unfortunately, many kids have to cope with members of their own family who crassly embrace conformity, ignorance, lunacy, and hate. Under those circumstances, you're left with no choice but to rebel. And depart.

CHARLES GEFAHR (*Yörn's Father*)

Jimmy's been gone for, well, let's see, it was twenty years last August. Some would say good riddance. But not me.

RUTH EPSTEIN (*Grade School Classmate*)

Olivia wasn't allowed to make valentines cards, but she asked permission to sing us a song. She went over to the old, out-of-tune piano and banged out a song she wrote. That was her Valentine's Day card to us. There was another Epstein in our grade, but his family pronounced it "stine" instead of "steen" and she rhymed something for both of us. I'll never forget it. She sang, "Is it byzantine or byzantine, 'cause it's Ruth Epstein but Art Epstein." Pretty good for a fourth grader.

HOX

I wrote songs for people instead of making or buying gifts. It started because my parents prevented me from taking part in school activities other than

regular homework. I heard a song written by Dave Frishberg called *Van Lingle Mungo*, in which he used names of baseball players for lyrics. I did the same thing when I was in one middle school—just used students’ names for the lyrics. At the next school, I created a rhyme for each person. I did the same thing for birthday parties, if I was allowed to go. Sometimes there would be two versions of a song, one flattering, one truthful. “Tom’s talk is so breezy” in one version became “Tom’s thoughts are so sleazy” in the other. “That Charles will succeed there’s no supposing” in one version became “Charles will advance through his brown-nosing” in the other. It was fun but I think it warped my perspective on writing lyrics because now I’m more concerned with the cadence and sound of words and less about the meaning. Yörn verbally jabs at me about this. He says my motto for writing lyrics should be “Denotation, Connotation, Whatever.” But Yörn’s idea of perfect lyrics would be Mozart’s *Requiem* or maybe *The*

Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana translated into Latin. Jeeze, not even Cole Porter could compete with that.

JANE HARVE (*Grade School Classmate*)

She never knew her dad and she didn't like her stepfather, but when he was crushed in that crane accident in Long Branch, she was affected by it. She had been a normally talkative little girl up to that point, but after that, she either kept quiet, or she made up obviously fake stories about being from another planet or related to one of the lions in the Bronx Zoo.

ED BYRNES (*High School Teacher*)

Olivia became Hox in her senior year and it bothered some people. She had friends at the local college so she didn't mix much with her classmates at Hooper High. Once our classes let out, she went to the college music studies department and played piano or organ for whoever wanted to rehearse. A musical, a hymn, a ballet recital... she'd play anything for

anybody as long as you didn't try conversing with her. Near the end of her final semester, the high school received a harpsichord in a bequest and we could hardly pry her away from it. She won a contest to play piano at the graduation ceremony but by then she left school to go out on tour with a road company of *Monty Python's Spamalot*.

HOX

I was ready to explode in my last year of high school. I had been held back a year in middle school because we moved about five times in six months just after my stepfather was killed, so I was already eighteen in my senior year, and I was rarin' to go.

SUE KURSON (*High School Classmate*)

She was one tough cookie. Someone made a pass at her and she told him, "Just because you're a full-sized dick doesn't mean you know how to use your itty-bitty one." He slapped her. She sighed, stepped up to him and hit him

about nine times before he fell down. They had to call an ambulance for him. Her hands were bleeding. She wrapped them with a couple of tampons and went back to playing the keyboard. “Doesn’t that hurt?” someone asked her. “No,” she said, “the blood wipes right off.” Then somebody asked, “How can you play the piano with your hands wrapped like that?” She said, “Badly, but still better than a lot of people.” Some called her a bitch but I called her focused.

GEORGE YAWS *(Probation officer)*

Jimmy was the most polite juvenile delinquent I ever worked with. He actually apologized for taking up my time. Once he found out I played banjo, he’d bring his guitar and we’d spend our sessions playing Flatt & Scruggs’ tunes.

YÖRN

It might sound odd since DANGERhOX is considered to be “funeral doom metal” or “sludge metal,” or however the hell they wanted to label our stuff, but I

always liked the roots of country music. I enjoyed the storytelling nature of country songs. And I loved bluegrass, that “high, lonesome sound,” they called it. The fingerpicking techniques used in up-tempo bluegrass tunes is particularly hypnotic, especially when you could get the tones of several instruments working together. Blends of guitar, mandolin, and banjo knock me out. Playing it keeps me grounded.

HOX

I loved classical, choral, jazz, *and* heavy music. But it always seemed to me as if something was missing...

YÖRN

I had all kinds of recordings—blues, folk, bluegrass, jazz, pop, choral, country, spoken word, baroque, opera, and metal. I got two stereos so I could play some of them at the same time. But no matter what I did, something was always missing...

HOX

I kept wanting to put fuzz tone on the big, fat supporting chords, and then play the fast stuff in and around the beat.

YÖRN

It just seemed like you could have a slow smash-boom-crash thing going in the rhythm section and then play all the zooming fast notes on top of that.

HOX

I just couldn't find anyone who agreed with me.

YÖRN

There just weren't any musicians who wanted to try it with me.

HOX

Until I met Yörn.

YÖRN

Until I met Hox.

CHAPTER 2

TEENAGE MOONDREAMS



TOM MANX (*Dated Hox*)

Olivia was weird. Well, she's Hox now. See what I mean? We went out once. We went to a club. She knew how to get in free. She knew how to get backstage. She knew how to get us drinks. She knew some people in the band. She talked to them but left me out. It was all D minor this and F sharp that. They laughed at a whole bunch of jokes that weren't funny. She was great to look at but not much fun to be with.

HOX

I must have set a world's record for the largest number of first dates. But then, a lot of women feel that same way.

CYNTHIA LU (*Dated Hox*)

When Hox and I went out, I think at that time we were both dating girls and boys. The boys just wanted sex but the girls were more complex, more interested in sharing sensuality. Girls are more erotic than boys are.

HOX

When you first start dating, you get excited by how someone looks. Then you find out that you also need to pay attention to what they're like as a person. Are they smart? Are they kind? Are they funny or serious? Unfortunately, if you keep raising your standards you can get to the point where you'll never go out with anybody.

ROLANDA HARRIS *(Dated Yörn)*

Yörn was handsome, he was in a band, he knew the bouncers at the clubs, and he always had money for drinks and dinner. Oh, and he was very good in bed. Very deliberate. Very considerate. What more could a girl ask for?

YÖRN

Everybody likes orgasms but we don't all approach them the same way. I like to go very slowly. Some women have told me they think I'm being attentive to their needs, but it's really to give me more pleasure. I usually only get to enjoy one

orgasm an evening so I want to take a nice long time getting there.

SALLY RIDGEWAY (*Dated Yörn*)

There was something twisted about the guy, something kind of dangerous, you know what I mean? That only made him more attractive, but it could be scary when he went off and visited something that was only in his head.

YÖRN

You never know when an idea will form in your mind. You never know where you'll be. It might be in the middle of a conversation. You're listening to a friend telling you some gossip, or how they saw a video that got eight point seven billion views in the first two minutes, or whatever the hell it might be, and—zap!—the solution to a compositional problem assembles itself in your noggin and every part of your consciousness is focused on that. It may be disconcerting to some people but it's how I work.

BILL ROZNER (*Dated Yörn*)

I sucked him off but he wouldn't do me. Nice enough guy up to that point, but fuck that shit!

YÖRN

Every time I let a man fellate me, it just seemed like research. Experimenting, I guess is how people put it. But every time I've been with a man I've been thinking about a woman so I gradually gave up on men.

GREG MULLIN (*Dated Yörn*)

We went out, and he was good to be with. Quiet. Well, quiet unless you asked for his opinion on something. Then he'd talk. But mostly the strong silent type. We went back to my place and I did him in the living room. Gave him a really good blow job. Then he wanted to leave. Said he had to do a remix of a song his band was recording. I asked him if he was going to take care of The Train. That's what I call my cock. He just said,

“The Train is going to have to find a different tunnel.” Really pissed me off.

YÖRN

I like my cock. I like what it does for me. Oh sure, it sometimes has a tendency to lead me astray, but in general I’m on very good terms with it. I say “it” because I refuse to go along with this odd naming thing. Some people think giving names to their erogenous zones and genitalia is cute. It’s not. It’s cutesy. And it’s peculiar that their imaginations stop there—you rarely hear someone calling their arm “big daddy” or their brain “the whopper.”

CHAPTER 3
IT'S COMPLICATED



HOX

Yörn and I first met on a double date. I was with a sculptor, he was with a stripper. Physically, everybody liked everybody's choices, but Yörn and I clearly were in synch mentally. We kept doing that smile-and-nod thing at stuff we said. And we were both doing that tight-lipped grimace thing whenever our dates said something. It was an evening draped in regret but bolstered by hope.

YÖRN

Hox and I knew we liked each other from the first nanosecond. I don't normally offer to shake hands when meeting people, but something made me stick out my hand to her. There was instantaneous electricity.

HOX

I've got this connection to some other energy force, or so some people tell me. Current and electric impulses flow through me. Holding hands can be uplifting. Being intimate can create an

electromagnetic field around our bodies. If only there was some way to bottle whatever the hell this is and put it on the market. “Electric Chill Pills” or something. Make a fortune.

DIERDRA (*Dated Hox and Yörn*)

I was dating Hox when she was dating Yörn. One night, we got the time and place mixed up and I met Yörn. Instant vibes. So now what do we do? Hox showed up, and she got what was happening right away. She was very logical. “We need to follow a schedule,” she said. It was like, “Hey, who’s dating who tonight?” Okay, I know what you’re thinking: three-way. But we never did that. Both Hox and Yörn said that things were complicated enough already.

YÖRN

There’s a song in *Cabaret* called “Two Ladies.” It makes it all sound like great fun, but there are drawbacks. It doubles the number of quarrels. It doubles the

number of family meetings. It doubles the number of anniversaries...

HOX

Suddenly, we found ourselves in a love triangle. It was strangely exciting. The personal interaction didn't get in the way of the music because Yörn and I were in separate bands.

YÖRN

It doubles the number of birthdays. It doubles the number of dinners. It doubles the number of drinks...

HOX

Eventually, dating two people started to wear each of us down.

YÖRN

It doubles the number of texts. It doubles the number of phone calls...

CHAPTER 4
BAND-O-MANIA



YÖRN

We each joined a couple of already-established bands.

HOX

The problem was that every band we joined had one good song, a couple of mundane songs, and a truckload of astonishingly bad songs.

YÖRN

There were occasional flashes of mediocrity amidst the dreck. But it was mostly dreck. Hox was in something called Twee Leviathan. It was an eight-piece band—you couldn't call it an "octet" because that word implies they were able to play together.

HOX

Yörn was in a rock band called Everyone Nonconforming Together. Great name, good logo, fair songs, bad musicianship. They had a lead singer with a voice made out of tungsten alloy, braided bullwhips, and shattered glass. If she had

been able to hit the right notes at the right time, she would have been terrific.

YÖRN

Next, Hox was in a pop-folk kind of thing called Cat Lifestyle. On vocals, they had two sisters performing harmony duets. One of them could sound gritty and pretty at the same time but the other one had a two-note range, and not the two you wanted. Their warbling was called avant-garde but that's just because the two vocalists couldn't agree on whether they were going to stay a fifth apart through the number, or maybe go a seventh apart on the chorus. And they would just battle it out through each performance. It was funny to see Hox trying to play supporting chords for singers who were going in different directions within the same song.

HOX

Yörn was in a jazz-rock fusion band called United Nations Security Council. Well, they were called that until they got

a cease-and-desist order from the United Nations Security Council. Within a couple of hours, they had become The World Court at The Hague, but, well, you can guess what happened. After that, you would think they learned a lesson, but no. They next called themselves The Chevrolet Division of General Motors. By this point, they were making some money playing lounge jazz in a hotel bar. To keep from going insane, they called their songs things like “Arsenic is Good for You” and “Express Your Emotion Through Explosion.” For some reason, GM objected to being associated with that. They broke up when most of the band members went to college or joined the Army.

YÖRN

Eventually, Hox and I formed our own bands, but not with each other. Which was silly, in a way, because we had started playing out together. Nothing formal. Just fooling around.

HOX

Yorn and I played coffeehouses and open mic nights. It was just for fun. I had an accordion and he had his acoustic guitar and we would start playing some sort of awful oom-pah band thing or a polka, and we'd look at each other like the other one was messing up.

YÖRN

We'd trade some lines back and forth, just sort of testing each other, speeding up, making it lively—no more oom-pah crap.

HOX

On cue, we'd stop, shrug, and I'd launch into Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and he'd play some supporting chords. Then I'd take the supporting chords and he'd play the same passage transcribed for guitar. Then we'd start dueling, playing faster, adding more ornamentation to the lines. Bach plus jazz, in a way. The audience would go nuts.

YÖRN

If we could have lived on tips and lattes, we might have done those gigs for the rest of our lives.

HOX

Meanwhile, we each tried to lead groups of our own. In the finest rock ‘n’ roll tradition, all of our bands had one good song, a couple of mundane songs, and a truckload of astonishingly bad songs. My first band was Stabat Mater, an art-rock thing with keyboards and cellos. Pretty, but also pretty boring.

CECILE ROBBIE *(Band Member)*

I am the only surviving string player from Stabat Mater. The band didn’t kill them, but they did die because of music. We were all part of the pit orchestra for the Tahoe Valley Music Theater & Light Opera Company. Thirteen people died when the stage collapsed during a performance of *Oklahoma!* Most ironic ending ever for “Oh What a Beautiful Mornin’.”

HOX

The accident was horrifying. I was supposed to play with them but the pit orchestra already had a keyboardist. Just luck that I wasn't there.

CECILE ROBBIE *(Band Member)*

Just luck that I lived. But I've never played in an orchestra pit again.

HOX

After Stabat, I went in a different direction and formed Din of Inequity, a noise-rock thing with five guitarists plus household appliances like blender and vacuum cleaner. Volume: 11, Talent: 4.

ROSCOE *(Band Member)*

I was master of appliances in Din of Inequity. That meant I was the one everybody consulted about earplugs. The best effect was when I'd stick a Shure SM57 mic into the blender. We couldn't afford to keep doing that so I'd grab some of the club's mics. They got pissed.

YÖRN

One of my bands without Hox was Poptop, and it sounded like The Ramones playing Broadway show tunes. Dreadful.

HARMONY JOHNNY (*Band Member*)

Playing guitar in any band with Yörn is a pain. The problem is that he can play anything. He had one song where his solo was about 50% harmonics. Any guitarist can play the harmonics at the fifth, seventh, and twelfth frets, but playing them fast is a real test. And Yörn was, I don't know, like subdividing the harmonics into more notes while he was playing other notes. I accused him of customizing his guitar. He picked up mine and played the same solo. Made me feel like shit.

YÖRN

My next fiasco was called Are You Strong Enough? and it was a total horror show. The drummer played stately 4/4

patterns. The bassist played twice the speed of the drummer, the violinist played twice the speed of the bassist, and the keyboardist used the arpeggiator function to play twice the speed of the violinist. Meanwhile, I played a pedal steel guitar through a big bunch of pawnshop distortion pedals so it sounded like someone was torturing a car. No one wanted to follow us on stage because we pummeled the audience into a stupor by the end of our set.

GUNNER *(Band Member)*

Are You Strong Enough? was a cult band, man. There were, like, seventeen people who came to every show. If they weren't dropouts and degenerates before discovering us, they were after!

YÖRN

One night, a drunk came weaving his way up to the lip of the stage. The guy leaned way over and stretched out one arm. I thought he was trying to steal the Echoplex unit but he stuffed some cash

into a coffee mug I had put between the legs of the mic stand. Unfortunately, there was still some whiskey in the mug. Fortunately, we could dry out the bills in between paper towels, so on that gig, we got an extra ninety-seven dollars. The bills were fragrant after that, but I love the smell of bourbon bucks in the morning. Nothing else in the world smells like that. Smelled like... hickory.

HOX

For a while, I played keyboards for a singer-guitarist named Nanci Wolfe. She was nice. She was also very pretty. Lovely, delicate features, but deceptively strong. One show was a classic rock night so Nanci was playing her Gibson Les Paul, which is a heavy hunk of wood. After the set, this cheesy reviewer for some e-zine came up and wanted a photo of him and Nanci holding her guitar. She had the strap off but he told her just hold the guitar in position. He stood behind her and put his hands on her hips. His friend held the camera.

When it flashed, he brought his right hand up to try copping a feel. He thought that she wouldn't be able to stop him because the guitar would start to fall if she let go. She snagged his hand while continuing to hold the guitar with her left hand wrapped around the fretboard. She had a good grip on both axe and asshole. She spun him around and tossed him off the stage. I caught a glimpse of him later, limping to his friend's car. That made me smile.

YÖRN

Hox and I went around to clubs together, seeing as many bands as possible. Some of the groups were sonically superb but lame musically. Others really killed it in terms of playing but they didn't have a proper sound mix.

HOX

The number of bad bands is frightening. But it makes sense when you consider the number of bad venues.

YÖRN

Clubs were lighting the stage with three 15-watt bulbs and a mirrored ball. There was more luminosity from the candles on the tables.

HOX

I'm surprised we didn't see some dweeb standing in the wings holding a sparkler and calling it a smoke machine.

YÖRN

Bad bands, bad clubs, bad sound, bad lighting, bad drunks, bad vibes... Hey, welcome to rock 'n' roll.

HOX

Yörn took me to a party in some god-forsaken part of the city where all the houses look alike and every other yard has weeds instead of lawn. We go into the house and there are mattresses nailed to the walls of the living room because that was the band's practice room. The group is setting up while a party is in progress. Every flat surface is covered

with liquor bottles, wine bottles, beer bottles, ashtrays, joints, and scented candles. They start playing so we retreat to the kitchen, where the *hors d'oeuvres* consisted of a bowl of potato chips. We can still hear the band, of course. Their songs were rip-offs of Motörhead, Black Sabbath, GWAR, and Celtic Frost. Yörn went outside to take a phone call and a guy they called Fairy Perry tried to pick me up. I told him, “No thanks, I’m here with someone.” He leered at me and said, “Someone, sometwo, how ‘bout a threesome?” I said I wasn’t interested and he asked for a hand job. This time, I told him please go away and he intensified his approach. I warned him that I was feeling threatened by his pressure. When he put a hand on me, I gave him a shot of pepper spray full in the face. He collapsed onto the kitchen floor, yelling and thrashing around. He started kicking the wooden doors under the sink to the same rhythm as his shouts. Nobody in the other room could hear him and people who came into the

kitchen didn't seem to care. The band launched into a rip-off of Five Finger Death Punch and the party rolled on. Yörn came back, looked down at Fairy Perry, twitching and moaning on the battered linoleum and asked me, "New dance step?" I said that the douchebag was suffering the consequences of his inappropriate actions. We took a bottle of wine and left the party. For some people, I guess this is all a routine part of rock 'n' roll.

YÖRN

Hox made a chart of every venue we attended, with ratings for acoustics, sound reinforcement, sound mixing, lighting, sightlines for the audience, restrooms, parking, and something called the ISF. She said that stood for the Icky-Sticky Factor. If your shoes stick to the floor as you walk through the place, or if you pull your hand back from something foreign on the seats or the stair handrails, those are "icky-stickies." Her idea was to exchange this info with bands in other

cities and create an online directory of musician-friendly venues. Nobody else wanted to do the work, or they were afraid of pissing off the club owners. But we could make use of the information once we started to get popular.

HOX

This is another area where my OCD came in handy. When we began getting offers to play around town, I could say we had a “cleanliness rider” in our contract. Once they signed the contract, we had some leverage to get proper facilities for the band and the audience.

YÖRN

Another thing Hox gets credit for is her insistence on having a superb FOH. She never wanted to leave that part of our show to chance.

RIKU FUJITA *(FOH Engineer)*

The front of house engineer, or FOH, is the person responsible for how the audience is hearing the concert. The

volume, the clarity, the sound pressure level, the time-delay factors, the balance issues, and the overall quality of the sonic experience while the band is performing. Some venues are a joy to work. Others are a disaster. There are places where you are fighting with the antiquated equipment, battling the in-house sound guy, arguing with the crew who need to readjust the placement or direction of speaker cabinets and baffles, and a dozen other difficulties. Plus, sometimes you are doing all this while sharing the workspace with the lighting director and his crew. The additional challenge with a band like Dh is that they want to find those audio frequencies that make the room shake. Working with Hox and Yörn was the biggest challenge and the biggest triumph of my career in the business of what some of us call “noise poise.”

YÖRN

Hox used to experiment with recording and playing back sounds, tones, crashes,

conversations, sneezes, chords, coughs, handclaps, drumbeats, everything. It was disconcerting to find her playing back a phone conversation where you were expressing love and affection. But she kept on recording. She captured the sounds of anything and everything as part of what she deemed her sonic investigations.

HOX

I think I embarrassed a lot of people by using their recorded voices for sonic experimentation. My brother got mad when he heard me blasting out his voice, which I had recorded when he was playing with his dog: “You da cutest widdle poochy-pie,” or whatever. But it was part of my investigating methods of presenting all types of vocals, music, and sound. I apologized to him and then got him backstage passes to his then-favorite group, Rot of Western Society. We haven’t spoken about it again, but I haven’t recorded him again, either. I am recording this conversation, so if you’d

like to hear your voice played back at 126 decibels, do let me know.

YÖRN

Listening to so much music resulted in our creating a “wish list.” If we could be at the greatest concert of all time, who would be on the bill? Jeff Beck. James Brown. Prince. Birgit Nilsson. Beatles. Stones. Jeff Beck. Pavarotti. Montserrat Caballé. Franco Corelli. Renata Tebaldi. Shirley Verrett. Kongar-al Ondar, the Tuva throat singer.

HOX

Yörn and I spent a lot of time creating a huge chart that listed and connected everything we liked in music. I mean, this thing covered a whole wall. We started with the drumming of Tony Williams in the Miles Davis band. Then the sonic layers in Terry Riley’s *A Rainbow in Curved Air*. The glory and reverence in Arvo Pärt’s symphonic and choral work. The arrangements and orchestrations in Philip Glass’ *Einstein*

on the Beach. The boom-ka-thud of Vanilla Fudge. And the northern light darkness of bands like Gloom Contour, Euphorium, and Desolate Worshippers.

YÖRN

The trick would be putting it all together. We were looking to make the biggest mash-up of all time. Our one charming and preposterously scary idea was to see if we could somehow gain control over every sound at once. We wanted our band to represent sonic triumph. We sought audio domination. If you look at a chart representing the frequencies that can be processed by the human ear, well, we were attempting to play that. All of it.

HOX

We not only wanted to combine multiple and usually incompatible genres of music, we wanted to play this new conglomeration at precisely the proper level to move the air, move the room, move the bodies in the room, and move the molecules in the bodies.

YÖRN

Let's face it, we wanted to own sound
itself.

HOX

We wanted to play with enough volume
to make your liver quiver.

CHAPTER 5
DARK NOISE



HOX

DANGERhOX began as a goth band called FourFive. We were good, if by good you mean average.

YÖRN

FourFive was deliciously, dementedly, and determinedly dark. Probably our most positive lyric was “Death is beckoning, beckoning, beckoning.” I guess the goal was to channel Edgar Allen Poe on mescaline.

HOX

God, we were the nasty little pessimists. We tuned down, and the songs were minor key and they modulated down to another minor key and the lyrics were like a stoner poetry slam on the topic of the apocalypse. “Which way will you die once more again today?” Imagine an evil Sylvia Plath on Quaaludes.

YÖRN

When the rhythm section wanted to start sharing in the songwriting, we gave it a

try with disastrous results. They were bringing in lines from Baudelaire and H.P. Lovecraft. We called them out on their plagiarism. “Hey, their stuff is, like, in the fuckin’ public domain, man,” was how one of them justified it.

HOX

FourFive got deep sixed.

YÖRN

We went back to searching for our sound by seeing more bands. I cashed in part of my trust fund and we scoured the nation.

HOX

We saw goth bands at Bar Sinister. We saw punk at The Deuce, and at Loosey’s, and at Jam Socket. We saw country in Nashville and at county fairs. We saw jazz at Nocturne and St. Flinty’s.

YÖRN

We saw arena rock shows: Beyonce, Justin Timberlake, Eminem, The Who. We went to see a cluster of Kpop bands.

They're all kind of like Milli Vanilli in that they're lip-synching, but the sound is often insanely good.

HOX

We went to see Powder but first had to endure an overlong set by a bunch of piggish and inept yahoos called The Larrys. These jerks were the epitome of shit people in a shit band. Finally, Powder came on and they were brilliant. They combined aggression with melody. Halfway through each song, you felt like singing along with the chorus while stamping your feet to the beat. They did three slam-crunch numbers without a pause and then let us all breathe for a moment. The lead singer addressed the crowd. "We'd like to thank the band that played before us," she began, and someone shouted, "They SUCKED!" The audience burst out laughing and applauding. The singer smiled sweetly and signaled the band that it was time for liftoff and they unleashed new salvos of turbocharged tuneage. It was great.

YÖRN

We were in the Midwest somewhere—Wisconsin, Minnesota, I don't know—and we found a vibrant punk scene. This is probably because living in the Midwest gives teens a whole hell of a lot of reasons to be despondent. We met a gang called the Down 'n' Outers and they gave us an address where they said “there's some really mad music going on.” So we got in our rental car, keyed in the location, and took off. We got to the industrial part of town and went past an abandoned five-story building. There were lots of parked cars and people standing around drinking, smoking dope, and shooting up. The GPS voice said, “You have reached your destination.” We parked the car and followed the unmistakable sound of thrashing bass and drums. After climbing over piles of shattered dirty drywall, we found the performance space in what used to be the building's atrium. Members of Cold Red Triangle and None But Ourselves were

pounding and wailing on guitars, bass, and drums. Hox was crestfallen. No keyboards. There must have been four hundred kids in a space for two hundred people. It was, essentially, one big mosh pit. Electric cables from the mixing board were snaking out the back of the improvised stage. We followed the power lines lying on the broken tile and cracked concrete. They led us down a corridor lit by the streetlamps outside the broken windows. At the end of the corridor, the cables went up over a pile of rubble and through a hole in the wall. Peeking through, you could see the electric lines went into the basement of the structure next door. Whoever was putting on this show was not only borrowing the building, they were also liberating the electricity of the neighbors.

HOX

As dutiful music junkies, Yörn and I went through a hip hop phase, an R&B phase, and a rap phase. Then, as is our wont, we looked for musicians who were

adding rock to those genres. Wrathe. Adjacent to the Device. Korn. Flaccid Wafer. Jefferson Square. Faith No More. There's some terrific stuff there, but I have come to realize and do hereby affirm that nothing or no one will ever ascend to the level of James Brown.

YÖRN

Rock, rap, electronica, funk... we looked for artists who were combining any or all of those genres to various degrees. Sinboy did some interesting stuff. Nica's Dream. Digital Cutup Lounge. Then we'd go back to pure funk. Ronkat Spearman, for example. Soul on a Roll. They were great. But if you're going to go for anything that has funk, you'll never top *James Brown Live at the Apollo, 1962*.

HOX

We had high hopes for industrial music. Both of us were initially keen on the idea of amplifying shop equipment *a la* Einstürzende Neubauten. The grinding

nature of the genre seemed fun. It's like they were assuring their fans, "We humbly offer you slam-bang *Sturm und Drang* audio excitement that will enable you to dance until you die." Intriguing concept.

YÖRN

There was a brief period where we considered theatrical rock. We enjoyed the wardrobe of Element 839, where the band wore white leather robot suits and the lead singer had a blouse made out of sheer nylon with a maxi skirt made out of hundreds of razorblades. Dopegang played ambient black metal while acting out a psychodrama involving doom, death, more doom, *Plan 9 From Outer Space*, and a surprising number of peacock feathers. Fun to watch, but it wasn't what we wanted to do.

HOX

I was impressed by the stagecraft of a couple of bands: Flesh for Dr. D and Dramatic Shadows. They both had fetish

costumes, simulated sex, three-foot-wide masks, symbolic violence, smoke machines, stilt walkers, basketball players dressed in giant rabbit suits, children and little people dressed as devils, and nude ballet dancers.

YÖRN

There are two ways you can experience these bands: (1) with eyes wide open while cowering, or (2) with eyes tight shut while shuddering.

HOX

The thunderous music of the “theater of rock” bands seemed like a concoction from hell: sixty percent symphonic metal, thirty percent Kurt Weill, and ten percent Looney Tunes soundtrack. The vocalists in both bands appeared pleased to be using words as weapons designed to lash out at the audience. While I would enjoy playing keyboards in a group like that, I wasn’t up for all the elaborate costumes.

YÖRN

Once again, we tried to form a band, and once again, we made a mistake. In this case, it was a large mishap called The Platinum Nipple Clip Orchestra. There were about twenty-seven people in the group, and neither Hox nor I were able to motivate them. I mean, we were lucky to see a dozen of them at any of the rehearsals.

HOX

One guy in PNCO would take baroque era concertos—stuff from Vivaldi, Bach, Albinoni, and Scarlatti—transcribe them backwards, record them at home, and then bring us the good parts. Best of all, he would also orchestrate and arrange them. Guy was a genius. No flare for rock, though, so he was always angry that we didn't play his redactions on strings, oboe, and continuo.

YÖRN

Hox was happy playing the harpsichord parts. She could have done that in her

sleep. But like me, she missed the heavier sounds.

HOX

Finally, it got to the point where Yörn and I had to talk. Not the boy/girl talk but the band meeting talk.

YÖRN

We knew we had to thrash things out. I don't think either one of us wanted to bring up the subject but the band was obviously not working.

HOX

I had been dreading the meeting because it meant the break-up of yet another conglomeration of musicians. It just seemed like a failure. And yet, we both had an idea of a different way to go and we were both upbeat about that. So it turned out to be a nice meeting and pointed the way to the future. We celebrated by playing a couple of Anton Diabelli pieces for guitar and keyboard, then we got stoned and improvised. He

switched to electric guitar and I was on the Hammond B3 because the chords from that are so fat that you can cover up some of your mistakes. Kind of. Then we went to the phones and laid off the orchestra. My favorite of the responses was, “Wait, we were still in a band?”

YÖRN

Hox and I decided we needed to record the songs the way we wanted them to sound and then find musicians who could join us in performing them.

HOX

And it only took us seven thousand hours of studio time to make the recordings.

YÖRN

No, no, no. Sixty-eight hundred hours, tops.

CHAPTER 6

DANGERhOX RISES



HOX

We allowed ourselves a half hour to come up with a name. Joking ensued. We each held a mic and played announcer. “Ladies and gentlemen, would you welcome to the stage... Fruit of the Doom.”

YÖRN

We screwed around with stupid names for a few minutes. “And now, the musical stylings of E. Fudd & the Tunes of Loonies.”

HOX

“Please give it up for Jack Ash.”

YÖRN

“Bill and the Shakespeares.”

HOX

“No Wire Coathangers.”

YÖRN

We tried imagining ourselves as a whole bunch of different names. Tuckfard.

3.14159. Jibberjabber Whippersnapper.
And my favorite of the moronic name
ideas: All Ears & Too Many Thumbs.

HOX

Our self-imposed time limit expired so we settled on DANGERhOX, which has my moniker hanging on the end of the English translation of Yörn's family name, Gefahr, which is danger in German. Yörn suggested the all-caps-but-one spelling like FIREHOSE did, so it had a logo effect in every type font. Now, we were ready to get down to the business of making organized noise.

YÖRN

Hox had a long list of influences, and she paired them up in ways that made me smile. Karlheinz Stockhausen and J.S. Bach. Steve Reich and Mozart. Lennie Tristano and Mendelssohn. Luciano Berio and Vivaldi. Thelonious Monk and Scarlatti. Bartok and Handel. Cole Porter and Villa-Lobos. Duke Ellington and Jules Massenet. Philip Glass and

Wagner. I think it was her way of pushing us to stay completely open to every possibility.

HOX

We started by laying down percussion tracks for a whole bunch of songs. Yörn played guitar and I played organ but our sounds weren't recorded—they went into the drummer's headphones as a guide for his work on the beats.

YÖRN

The recording of every one of our first four singles began with rhythm section tracks we made in a beautiful little studio called Serenity of the Golden Path. We got to use it for weeks at an incredibly low rate as long as we paid in cash. Yeah, that sounded suspicious, but we didn't look a gift horse in the mouth.

HOX

Turned out we were trespassing. The studio belonged to a religious cult. Their sanctified meeting place was right next

door to the recording studio. All the photos on the walls were of gospel artists, some of whom we recognized and liked. Apparently, the church and studio were supposed to be closed while the elders were on a retreat or a soul cleanse or whatever. The property manager just decided to “rent out” the studio. Since he had no interest in what we were doing, he let us alone with all the gear while he went on what he called his “Santa Anita sabbatical.” As he put it, “I like to play the ponies.” Yörn is fastidious when handling sound equipment, so everything stayed in great shape. We even dusted the place and I repaired a sticky key on their electric piano. And we made some wonderful music in there.

DANIEL YEWITZ (*Tuba player*)

Yörn played me a demo of a song with the electric bass mixed out front. He said he wanted my tuba playing instead of the electric bass. Then he showed me the sheet music for the part. *Then* he told me to use my own feel for it. Said he liked

my playing on a couple albums I did for The Word and Sir Walter & the Rhythm Kings. He even hummed some of my lines from songs on those albums. I was flattered, man. This guy researched hard to find the people on Dh tracks. I am proud to have been even a tiny part of their heavy band.

YÖRN

Daniel creates great bass lines. Supple, swinging, tasteful. He just happens to be using a tuba to make all these wonderful bass sounds.

DANIEL YEWITZ (*Tuba player*)

The work I did on that one Dh track got me more session work in the next year than I had in my life up to that point. It was great for me personally, and for my family, but there was one humorous downside to it. I've been told that I play pretty good tuba, but there is no way I can play the sound they gave me in the mix of the Dh recording.

CY 'KNOBS' WILKINS (*Mixing Engineer*)

God, what *didn't* we do to that tuba! First, Yörn doubled the tuba part note for note on an electric bass. Then he doubled it on an upright bass—an acoustic bass. Then Hox doubled it on the lower octaves of an organ. And then we spent about nine hours melding all those parts together. “Keep the tuba sound,” Yörn would say, “but shape the other parts around it a little.” Trickiest part was getting the decay to line up with the different echo effects Yörn wanted on each part of the song.

YÖRN

Every instrument leaves notes hanging in the air. The sonic vibrations continue inside the chamber of the instrument, or in the reverberations of a string. The sound sneaks off and scurries away from the instrument and squiggles into the recesses of human ears. The point is that every note lasts a little while, even if you dampen the strings. You can cut off the decay of the sound but that sound still

resides in your ear, even if just for a split second. Your mind retains the auditory information even if it has disappeared from the room. It's possible to alter the experience of hearing something by altering the way a note sounds after it has already been played. And we exploited that possibility on every track we recorded.

JIM CELTA (*Drums*)

Yörn had written out the drum parts but he didn't insist on my doing everything exactly like the sheet music. He wanted me to do the part the way I was feeling it. He said, "Let's do a take. If it's good, we'll try to improve it. If it's great, we'll still try to improve it. When we can't make it any better, we'll know we're done." That's a great way of working, man. It was a genuine "we're both professionals here" type of thing, you know? So I said, "Fuck yeah!" And then right away I kind of regretted it, you know, because we were in a church, or anyway next door to one.

SAM WASHINGTON (*Drums*)

I didn't know what to make of this Yörn guy at first. He was so focused on the music it was scary. But he was also really calm while he was so intense, and that was also kind of scary. He hummed a couple of drum patterns, and I nodded. Then he hummed them on top of one another. Okay, I thought, that's a little more complicated, but it's cool. And then he hummed the whole thing in double-time. I couldn't play it. We tried, like, four takes and I couldn't get it. I got mad and told him he was nuts, and that nobody could play it. So, Yörn came over to the drum kit, took over and played the damn thing. I felt about an inch tall. He smiled at me and said, "You can play it better than I can." I'm thinking, what the hell is he talking about? I just proved I couldn't do it! I was new to doing any session work and this was my career on the line here. I'm tense, I'm angry, I'm sweating. And he tells me, "Look, man, I know these

patterns inside and out because I wrote them.” Yörn told me, “You have to realize that I’ve been playing this stuff since I was twelve. I have been dreaming of recording them for *half of my life*. But I only play it mechanically. Percussion isn’t my area of expertise. That’s your area. You’re going to play this better than me.” Jesus H. Christ. I mean, look, since that day, I’ve played on nearly two dozen Grammy nominated tracks and three number one hits, but I have never forgotten what he told me. It was inspirational. I couldn’t wait to get back at the kit and try it again. I was totally up for the session, you know? And then I went and fucked up the next take! Yörn smiled and said, “Well, that broke the tension.” We cracked up for about five minutes. Once we caught our breath, we got back to work. I’ll play with that guy whenever or wherever he wants.

HOX

It was sad when we had to stop recording at what we called Studio Serene. We

were virtually shooed out of that lovely place, me clutching our hard drives with the recorded files, and Yörn doing that stagger-walk thing while grappling with five guitar cases. On my way down the steps to our van, I spotted the choir director of a gospel recording we liked. I told her how much I enjoyed one of her albums and she was delighted. She asked what we had been recording in their studio and I told her that our stuff might be called “not so easy listening.”

CHAPTER 7

PLAYING TOGETHER & APART



GEOFF DEWES (*Recording Engineer*)

I've never seen any rock musicians so hardworking as Dh. Those two marched into the studio with a mental list of what they wanted that day. They explained it with words, with diagrams, and with recorded examples. *Lots* of recorded examples. Everything from Gregorian chants to The Weeknd. Then they offered to help. Nobody does that. I mean, some people *say* it, but these two actually meant it. When some amps had to be moved and baffles set up, they were right there working with me. We got to talking and I told them they were aiming for a sound that was pretty big. They said, "Well, yeah, that's why we came to you." They knew about a huge project I engineered. It was a live recording of a revival meeting and gospel show. It must have had three hundred performers. Rock bands. Soul bands. Hip Hop. Gospel singers and harmony groups. Choirs. "Yeah, we want all of that," Yörn told me. "No, we want *more*," Hox said.

IAN BRIAN *(Producer)*

Producing DANGERhOX was always easy on a personal level—we all got along fine. And I was into what they were trying to do musically. I mean I really liked it. But making it happen technically could be a struggle. They always wanted things to sound huge and majestic. I kept saying you've got to leave some room in the sonic space for all the sounds. If you try to add a choir to another choir, it may be problematic. And I can make one guitar sound like fifty guitars, but they wanted fifty guitars. It got messy. They rang up people in seventeen countries to get them to play electric piano on the same song at the same time while I'm supposed to record them off of phone lines and data transmission. It was always stimulating but it was a constant battle.

TAM REGROF *(Producer)*

I had some interesting discussions with Yörn about his project. He knows

everything about music and a lot about sound, but it seemed like the best thing to do was try to talk him into listening to his producer. He said, “Oh, I’m listening. I just keep hoping he’ll figure out how to do the impossible.” At least he knew that the things he wanted couldn’t really be done, or at least not yet. I told him that no one listened on sound systems big enough to handle everything he was trying to put into the recordings. “Well, we need to change that,” he said. He was calm about it, but very strong. Turned out he really intended to alter the way everyone listened to recorded music.

STUART LEVINSOHN (*Studio Owner*)

This guy—Yearn, Yawn, whatever the fuck—was not normal. I mean, even for a musician. He actually expected to get the whole world to switch over to multi-channel surround sound systems that could reproduce audio from 15 cycles per second all the way up to 40,000 so people could fully appreciate his music. I mean, the guy’s fuckin’ nuts!

TAM REGROF (*Producer*)

Let's face it, Yörn wanted to change the world, or at least the part of it related to sound reproduction. A tall order, but if there's anyone who can pull that off, I'm betting it's Yörn.

YÖRN

There were always multiple sessions to record the keyboard parts. First, we had the synth set to play choir voices. That way, when we recorded piano, organ, and guitars, we knew what tones and frequencies to avoid. Once we got the choir in the studio, we wanted to make certain there was a sonic opening for the vocals.

HOX

For weeks, Yörn was trying to line up a choir for the recording sessions. The Ambrosian Temple Choir. The King's Singers. The Berlin Opera Chorus. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Nobody wanted to work on our project. We had a

few strikes against us. First, we were unknown. Second, we were not paying enough. Third, we wanted them to record two versions of our charts, one in the classic “follow the sheet music with rigorous intensity” manner, the other in a more “feel the beat” gospel choir sort of thing.

YÖRN

We put together an ad hoc group, the Dangerous Gospel Choir & Society of THC Aficionados, which everyone called The DeeGees. We found the best method was to record a straight version, then the free-form version, then the straight version again.

BETTY GRETCHEN *(Choir Director)*

That Yörn, I called him Jimmy all the time because I saw his real name on the publishing paperwork. That Jimmy, he was something! Wanting us to sing it perfect, then jazz it up, then sing it perfect again. I thought he was crazy. So I told him so. He smiled at me. He

played part of what we had recorded and land sakes, he was right to do it that way. After sticking so close to the sheet music and the meter in the first version, we were aching to cut loose on our version of his tune, and let me tell you, that jazzy gospel version cooked! And then, since we got all that fun out of our system, we would catch our breath and do the serious one like it was for a Midwestern white girl's funeral or something and it turned out real pretty. That Jimmy, he's a charmer.

BRIAN "BRAIN" SUGAR (*Sound Engineer*)

Mixing the choir vocals was a lot more delicate than you'd expect for a rock recording. We would keep everything as perfect and "classical" as possible for the first half of the song, then start letting the looser approach take over for the second half. Sometimes we would keep the voices very dry—no effects on them at all—but then put in a cathedral echo effect for the end of the track. Yörn had stuff like that going on all the time. It's

why people have to find their own way of playing Dh songs live—there’s no easy way to make it sound like the recording.

SUSAN MILBANK (*Marimba Player*)

The wildest thing I’ve ever been asked to do at a recording session was when I was working on the first single for the heavy metal band, DANGERhOX. They had me pick sections of the song—I think it was about fifteen minutes long—and play a counter melody to what was being played by the string orchestra. You could barely hear my lovely little instrument in the midst of this ocean of sounds. They—Yörn and Hox—were so very good to work with. After the session, Hox programmed my marimba sounds into a synthesizer and she and I played a few duets. We improvised a friendly marimba duel. She was so much fun—she knew every joke about my area of percussion: marimbas, vibraphones, xylophones, glockenspiels—the works.

CHAPTER 8
FESTIVAL
OF THE
HUNGRY
GHOSTS



HOX

We weren't even scheduled to play the main stage. Hell, we thought we weren't even supposed to play at all. We got to our performance tent only to find that nothing had been set-up. They were using it for first-aid. "Where's all our equipment?" Yorn asked. We got shrugs from everyone we asked. Can't blame them—they were coping with about nine dozen bad acid trips being brought in for treatment every five minutes.

YÖRN

The people putting on the Hungry Ghosts Festival were well intentioned but a few things hampered them in their desire to put on a big outdoor music festival. First, none of them had ever produced a music show larger than a "we're all friends here" hootenanny in the church parking lot. Second, they all belonged to a semi-religious cult that was deeply into chasing spirituality via the ingestion of mind-altering chemicals.

HOX

City Councilmen and members of the Civic Center Improvement Association introduced us to some people from the religiosity cult, a few of whom we already knew from playing around town at church jams and from being chased out of their recording studio. They wanted us to join a group from the church choir who intended to do a combination Rock 'n' Holy Roller revival meeting type of thing. Our part of the event was only supposed to take place in one of the tents that were being set-up in the park next to the convention center where the humongous concert was going to be taking place. We knew a lot of the singers and we liked their idea of combining rock with gospel, so we said yes right away. The show didn't pay anything but they would cover the cartage fees to get our gear to and from the site and we got them to agree to let us record our set and release it if we thought the sound was good, so, you know, what the hell.

JAMES FARROLONE *(City Official)*

There were problems right from the start. City ordinances were ignored left and right. The organizers of the program didn't plan for enough food or water. They oversold the event. They didn't have enough first aid stations. There were parking problems, transit problems, security problems, sanitation problems. They had poor relations with the artists who were supposed to be the stars of the show.

SHIRLEY LUCCI *(Mayor's Office)*

All four headlining acts didn't show up. Three of them later said they had never been contacted in the first place, and the fourth was stuck at the airport with visa issues.

MARTIN COEN *(Mayor's Office)*

Trouble. Big trouble, that's what it was. You could sense that disaster was coming right at us. I warned everybody

not to allow this thing to go forward, but did they listen?

MARSHALL HENDRON (*Police Captain*)

There wasn't enough security and there wasn't enough crowd control. That area of downtown could reasonably hold eight, maybe nine thousand people. Some of the media estimates said there were three times that many. We didn't want to create any more problems than we already had, so we looked the other way for a lot of the drug use. Marijuana, pills, cocaine—we didn't move on anybody unless they posed a threat to themselves or to others. You know, angry drunk, falling down drunk. Or if they were shooting up. But other than that, we held back.

BUD POLCHEK (*Police Officer*)

We held back. We *had* to hold back. We were outnumbered about a thousand to one. The whole thing was a mess. Plus, we couldn't even call on the so-called security that was hired for the concert

because most of them were all just as wasted as the people they were there to protect.

HOX

I've never been offered so many drugs in my whole life. A day after the concert, one ezine said they had seen the use of every pharmacological mood-altering substance known to humankind. That crowd was a mass of hungry and thirsty people all jacked up on cocaine, methamphetamine, mescal, lysergic acid, alcohol, THC, and cough syrup. It's been several years now but I'll bet that there are some people out there who are still fucked up from what they ingested at that concert.

D'SHONDA WASHINGTON *(Police Officer)*

As the day wore on and none of the promised artists had arrived, the crowd was getting heated up. Bad news was coming. You could feel it. You could smell it.

BRIN BURMILL (*Journalist*)

First, the crowd got annoyed. Then the crowd got restless. Then the crowd got mad. And in some parts of the crowd, things got dangerous.

YÖRN

Everything went wrong with everything. Hox and I talked things over with each other and the band. We were going to just walk away from the scene. Then we saw that the cartage company had put our gear on the main stage.

HOX

We were surprised to see our instruments on the big bandstand. Yorn's three guitars, Leroy's bass, Stan's drums, my synths and the Hammond B3. And there must have been 50,000 watts of amplification up there.

YÖRN

I don't know what got into Hox. She said, "This is it. This is meant to be." Just as the crowd started to throw stuff at

the stage and each other, she grabs our arms and says, “Come on, we’re doing this,” and headed for the bandstand. I followed her to try to stop her and that just made her move faster. It was nuts. I glanced over my shoulder to see this ocean of angry stoned faces stretching out from the edge of the stage all the way to the high rise buildings on the other side of the park, but right behind me, Leroy, Stan, and a couple of the gospel singers were moving right with us. We all ran out on stage behind Hox. It was insane.

BRIN BURMILL (*Journalist*)

Hox grabbed Yörn and the band, plus three of the rock ‘n’ gospel singers. She waved them to follow her. She led them out on stage. Nobody recognized them, so people started to boo. Hox strode to her keyboards, planted herself in front of her Hammond B3, and slammed into the opening chords of the old Deep Purple hit, “Hush.” The band joined in and played like their lives depended on it,

and the singers just fucking *killed it*. The crowd was eager to destroy something or have some fun, and, well, there it was: fun. The people near the front were pounding on the stage in time to the music, the audience began singing along on the chorus, and the only question was, could the band keep this up for an hour to please this mass of humanity that was now surging with excitement and desire. The crowd had gone through a lot to get there and they were adamant about being entertained. Holy fucking shit did they ever get what they wanted.

YÖRN

Hox was possessed. Before we knew what was going on, she was leading us—the band and the singers—into “I’m a Man,” first in the Bo Diddley slow soul-crush version, then with a perfect segue into the Yardbirds’ fast version. The audience was eating it up. They were jumping in unison. There were thousands and thousands of bouncing heads. People were pogoing like crazy.

LEROY SHAMBLIN (*Bass*)

Hox never let up. And Yorn did the guitar freak-out at the end of “I’m A Man” like he had invented it. We hit this enormous climax to that song and Hox started playing “Expressway to Your Heart” without knowing if anybody knew the words. She was just radiating confidence that we could carry it off instrumentally. Tyrone knew the song and he was a monster on that thing. Without a break, she went into “Gimme Some Lovin’,” the Spenser Davis Group song that Steve Winwood sang. Tyrone knew that one, too, and nailed it. Women were throwing panties and bras at him for the last half of the song.

TYRONE BROWN (*Singer*)

Everything worked. The band played Motown and we sang Motown. They played gospel songs and we sang gospel. They played classic rock. They played R&B. They played reggae. Whenever the band and the singers had to agree about

the next number, Hox vamped on a J.S. Bach Prelude or Toccata and then she'd pull off a smooth transition into the start of whatever the band had come up with. What she did was completely, totally, fucking amazing. Excuse my language.

CECILIA ROBINSON (*Singer*)

It was like fate just brushed us with the magic of the spheres and we were blessed. That show was like stars shooting across the sky. Don't anybody tell me you can't be touched by the Holy Spirit in music. You can. And we proved it that day.

YÖRN

We played for almost three and a half hours. Our clothing was drenched in sweat. My tennis shoes were making that squidgey sound like when you get caught in the rain and step in a puddle. We were exhausted. And it felt great! We went to a first aid station to get some water and Hox said to me, "You know, we didn't play a single DANGERhOX song in the

whole set.” I told her everything was magnificent and if we never played another note, this would be considered a great career.

STAN WILKS (*Drums*)

I’m going to remember that concert for as long as I live. I have never felt so perfectly connected with other musicians like that, ever.

FREDDIE STARR (*Fan*)

It was a groove. A total deep layer metallic gloss super saturated body slam double shot espresso groove job, man. They partied on stage so we could all party in the pit. They gave everything they had, man. There will never be a mosh that big again.

MICHELE O’HARA (*Fan*)

I danced, I sang along, I hurt my hands from clapping, and my cheeks ached from smiling all the time. I had a *great* time!

SAMUEL BECHDORFF (*Musicologist*)

The concert presented by the band DANGERhOX was a distillation of multiple genres. They played everything from “Louie Louie” to J.S. Bach, from Willie Dixon to “Jesus Touched my Heart and Healed my Soul,” and from “Suspicious Minds” to “Nessun Dorma” from *Turandot*. They took the crowd through the entire history of emotion-based music and made them love it. And it was seamless. It was so smooth while it pulsed. I have never seen musicians get a formerly angry mass of humanity moving together like that.

BRIN BURMILL (*Journalist*)

They were fucking astonishing. They were fucking amazing. They were fucking awesome. They were fucking astounding. And those are just the “a” words.

BART PETERS (*City Official*)

They saved the day. If it hadn't been for those people taking over the concert,

there would have been a riot and a lot of people would have been hurt. They deserve a medal.

HOX

Next thing you know, we were invited to perform at a half-dozen festivals, all with our own songs. Then the first single came out and every drug-user in the world wanted to come experience our brand of sonic ecstasy in person. A band was born.

YÖRN

Suddenly, everything changed. We went from “Danger who?” to “Come play for us!” in the space of a heartbeat. We were on the ride of our lives.

CHAPTER 9
IT'S NOT PERSONAL
IT'S BUSINESS



HOX

Some very strange people offered us some very strangely worded documents they wanted us to sign. We knew they were lying because they were talking.

YÖRN

I'm not certain what to make of people who look at music as a commodity.

HOX

The party of the first part, hereinafter known as "Artist," shall work for a specified term of contract with the party of the second part, hereinafter known as "Company," such Company engaged in selling music in any and all forms at any time throughout the known universe, hereinafter known as "Territory," both parties operating for an unspecified Term...

YÖRN

It's amazing how some people have perfected the fake smile.

HOX

...a term that can be extended or extinguished by the Company which shall enjoy exclusivity over Artist's creations while paying royalties equal to or less than the amount set to be recouped by Company...

YÖRN

Someone told me that Frank Zappa once said, "There's more business than music in the music business." Not sure if Zappa said it, but it's a true statement.

HOX

...but notwithstanding the entirety of the foregoing, the Company shall hereinafter fucking own the Artist.

YÖRN

Business isn't personal because to be personal requires humanity. We met a whole succession of non-humanity humans. It was depressing.

HOX

We took a meeting with Thorstenson Gieselensen. [*Pseudonym. —Ed.*] He was a big, important dweeb at Swagshop Records. [*Fictitious name. —Ed.*] He arranged to have Yörn called out of the room and then he told me that Dh would be offered a contract if I'd fuck him. I told him I'd have to discuss it with Yörn.

YÖRN

We got back to our loft and Hox told me what that asshole had said. I was seething, but she was very calm. She actually said she was willing to go to bed with this douchebag if it would help the band. I told her, “Not a chance in hell.”

HOX

Yörn was very sweet about the whole record exec lay-to-play fiasco. When I told him I would do it for the career, he said, “You don't need to be worrying about that right now. You need to be worried about how you're going to talk

me out of going over there and fucking the guy up.” I told him that was very gallant but he had better arrange a solid alibi before committing assault. He didn’t take that well so I stopped joking. We ranted and raved some more about it and eventually we both calmed down. Or so I thought.

YÖRN

I followed the guy. I had friends follow the guy. We learned his schedule. Every Friday afternoon, he went to a bar with valet parking, after which he would drive to pick up his very jaded trophy wife at her gym. While the douche was in the bar, one friend of mine distracted the valet staff while another friend and I opened his car. I put a pair of panties and a half-used lipstick between the seat and the door on the passenger side. Not long after that, the music trades had stories about his very messy divorce.

CHAPTER 10

DEATH KNELLS & DECIBELS



HOX

Every location has certain properties affecting how sound travels within the site. If you're singing in the shower and find the right note, you can make the tile rattle. We wanted to find that sweet spot in every venue we played.

YÖRN

My goal was for people to hear the harmonics hiding inside each chord and even each note. With the right set of circumstances, I knew we could present sounds inside sounds. Sure, we might destroy the building in the process, but we were willing to sacrifice an edifice or two in the pursuit of sonic refulgence. We just had to have a clause built into our live performance contracts absolving us of any financial responsibility for building damage.

HOX

Volume is measured in decibels, or dB. There was often a love/hate relationship

between Dh and dB. We tried to push the limits of sound in every venue.

TONY FEIGERSON (*Sound Engineer*)

Decibels are a logarithmic measurement and it involves more math than most people care to use in real life. But look at it this way:

- breeze rustling leaves, 15 dB
- whispering, 25 dB
- light rainfall, 40 dB
- vacuum, 70 dB
- lawn mower, 90 dB
- rock band, 110 dB
- police siren, 120 dB
- gunfire, 150 dB

MEFODI SAWETSKI, *Ph.D. (Audiologist)*

This band they call Dh was pretty with the music but ugly with the volume. Their compositions frequently had some very interesting use of triads. And they often composed with the trick of resolving to the tonic just before jumping up a third or a fifth. That is an excellent

aural shocker. Very exciting. But the volume! Ooof, way much too high. If one is feeling the foundation of a building moving and shuddering, you should turn things down a little.

FRANK W. FOSTER (*Sound Engineer*)

It's not just the decibels, it's the sound pressure level, the SPL. Cup your hands around your ears. That's volume. Now make a fist and thump it against your chest. That's SPL. The Dh approach was to push the air around in the room so you felt the sound all over your body. They wanted the bass to be pounding on your torso and the drums to be slapping your head. And vice versa. Plus, they wanted you to feel the music from the floor up through your shoes.

GERRY LARRY (*Journalist*)

“From out of the clouds of the cosmos, DANGERhOX creates a new world in which time and space have all the usual restrictions removed. Theirs is a world unto itself and you can choose to resist it,

in which case you will stand alone, fearing your own mortality while forsaking the possibility of ecstasy and elation; or, you can surrender to their passion, their vision, their revelation, their re-shaping of the very meaning of existence.” *[From a letter sent to Hox and Yörn, later published in the Pitch Dark ezine. —Ed.]*

JEREMY DORN *(Fan)*

I thought Dh was frightening at the start of their show. So much was thundering, shuddering, vibrating. And then the drugs kicked in and it was as if I was now the reason for their show. They weren't just doing it for me, I was part of what they were doing for everybody. It was real while it was unreal.

PATTY MATTA *(Fan)*

The sound was all over you! The show was like nothing anybody has ever experienced! It was wild, untamed, and outrageous!

VANN GIANNI (*Sociologist*)

There was no escaping the noise. Their show was nothing like a normal person would expect in a concert. It was feral and outrageous.

WILL JOHNSEN (*Fan*)

There is nothing like it. Not just in terms of a concert. I mean there is nothing else like it in the world. It grabs you, it plays with you, it lifts you up into a different place in the world. Dh music makes you feel like you can do more, go further, be greater.

STEVEN R. MORRIS (*Fan*)

There are worlds inside worlds at a DANGERhOX show. You literally re-live parts of your life because of the layers of tones that build a foundation under you, lifting you up to the heavens. Every note, every beat, every sound, every second of their show carries you from regret for your sins to a promise of a better life.

JO WIRLITZ (*Libertarian Monthly*)

I didn't get it. It was loud in a way that altered your sense of reality, but is that a good thing? It moved inexorably from point A to point B and it took an hour to do so, an hour that felt like an eternity.

BUSTO (*Roadie*)

Hox and Yörn were the nicest fuckers I've ever worked with. And their sound was infuckingcredible, man!

K.T. MISTRAL (*Venue Manager*)

They caused thousands of dollars' worth of damage. There were cracks in the ceiling. All the mirrors in the rest rooms shattered. The light fixtures in the lobby are hanging by a thread. We will never book this horror show again!

ZBIGNIEW LAURELING (*Poet*)

They are the apotheosis of spiritual frenzy. Within their sonic creations are the beginning of one's search for the soul and the conclusion of one's doubts for the truth of existence.

COLIN BOBB (*Public Relations*)

After their first show on their first tour, doing publicity for them was all about saying “maybe” to people and then not calling them back. No need, because they’d be calling again tomorrow. I had a rule: I’d only consider a written request. My staff and I spent most of our time fending off the writers we didn’t want to bother with. I’d come into the office and there’d be two or three hundred requests from photographers, videographers, interviewers, ezines, blogs, broadcast media, college thesis writers, fan clubs, and crazies who somehow got our number. And this insanity went on for weeks.

J. PRESTON PRIESTLY (*Psychologist*)

They entice and entrance the crowd, true, but their audience pays a psychic price for the temporary excitement of their monstrous, momentous, mountains of sound. The id, ego, and superego were not meant to clash like that.

DATAPOINT (*Skate Boarder*)

Awesome! Sometimes they rock, but mostly they roll over you with a big, fat bunch of everything blasted out of the biggest, fattest sound system in the history of the world.

ANTICHRIST (*Gamer*)

Dh should be the soundtrack to every FPS. [*First Person Shooter, a type of violent video game.—Ed.*] This shit is the shit!

YÖRN

Just as many people hated us as liked us, but the ones who liked us seemed to be better organized. I really don't know why such a wide variety of people responded positively to our music. A lot of our songs had just as few chords as Harold Budd. I guess it was the amplification and the guest artists. We were always fortunate to get great people to play with us.

HOX

Yörn was always muttering, “Somebody probably did this already,” and then complaining, “We aren’t new, we aren’t new.”

YÖRN

Brian Eno might have used some of these same chord progressions when he was doing his ambient recordings. Sure, I knew our stuff came from our brains, but that doesn’t mean some parts of the melodies weren’t done by somebody else before us.

SIN DEE (*Pagan Priestess*)

The sound! The sound! The sound!

FOXGLOVE (*Goth*)

They are the dark sound that brings light. Being in the presence of Dh delilvers transcendence. You hear colors, taste sky, and see the soundtrack of your soul. They welcome the evening star of your finality.

SIN DEE (*Pagan Priestess*)

Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound!
Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound!
Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound!
Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound!
Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound!
Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound!
Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound! Sound!
Sound! Sound! Sound!

CHAPTER 11

YÖRN *TEEN POP* INTERVIEW



Favorite color?

Mauve.

Favorite soft drink?

Sparkling water.

Favorite alcoholic beverage?

Bloody Mary.

Celebrity crush?

My celebrity crush from the past would be Martha Vickers. Of the present: Hudson Olivia Xavier.

Desert isle music?

The Ring of the Nibelung.

Favorite school subjects?

Music, choir, and study hall.

Favorite outfit?

On a girl, a miniskirt. On me, jeans and a t-shirt. Unless it's for a party, then it would be the other way around.

How would you describe your perfect girlfriend?

Very carefully.

Best song you ever heard?

“I Want You,” Bob Dylan, from *Blonde on Blonde*. Or maybe “Memphis Blues Again,” same album. Or maybe “Eight Miles High,” by Clark, McGuinn, and Crosby, recorded by The Byrds. Or maybe— Oh, who am I kidding? It’s “Nessun Dorma,” from Puccini’s *Turandot*.

Favorite fast food?

PBJ sandwich on Dave’s Killer Bread.

Favorite dining out food?

Sashimi.

Bad habits?

I stalk music writers.

CHAPTER 12

HOX ART SCENE INTERVIEW



Favorite Opera?

The Cunning Little Vixen by Leoš Janáček.

Which guest villain would you be in *The List of Adrian Messenger*? (Bonus points for author of book and director of movie.)

Oh, definitely Kirk Douglas. He stole the picture from George C. Scott, which is not an easy thing to do. The author was Philip MacDonald. The director was John Huston.

Harpichord compositions performed on a piano, yes or no?

Absolutely no way, unless it's Glenn Gould.

Favorite Noel Coward song?

Room with a View.

Favorite hue in Thomas Gainsborough's *The Blue Boy*?

His rose lips.

Favorite accompanist?

Gerald Moore.

Favorite keyboardist?

Gould, obviously, but also Bill Evans, Lennie Tristano, Sonny Clark, Andrew Hill, Brad Mehldau, Mal Waldron, Idil Biret, Martha Argerich...

Favorite singer?

Irmgard Seefried.

Book, non-fiction?

Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail, 1972, by Hunter S. Thompson.

Book, fiction?

100 Poems, Edward Estlin Cummings.

Favorite joke?

“That’s not a nude piano, it’s a harp.”

CHAPTER 13

SCRAPBOOK FROM THE ROAD





*That feeling you get just before
going out on stage*



The amplification awaits



That feeling you get on stage



Friend & constant companion



Too close to the laser projector!



Good to have a hip entourage



Hello Cleveland!



*That time in Rio when we
had a sax orchestra thing*



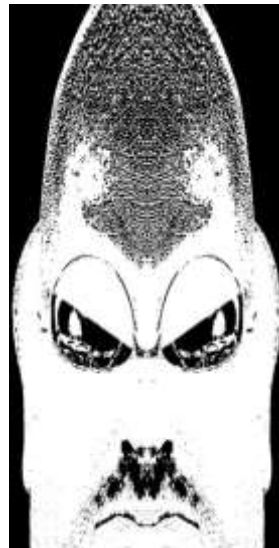
Backup singer with great lips



Singer who hit on Yörn



My favorite pic of Yörn



Yörn's favorite pic of Yörn



That time the bus broke down



We told them we had gerbils



Two settings: loud and louder



Well-organized groupies



Scenes like this were happening in the lobby of our hotel in Seattle... some sort of COSplay convention was in town.



Yörn self-portrait

CHAPTER 14
GROUPIES



HEATHER THE HEATHEN (*Groupie*)

I'm not a groupie. I just like to fuck guys in bands.

YÖRN

Once people start talking about your music, either loving it or hating it—or both—everything changes in your life.

HEATHER THE HEATHEN (*Groupie*)

I also like to fuck girls in bands.

YÖRN

If you get national media attention, right away some people begin thinking about doing you.

HOX

Maybe they're hot for celebrities or maybe they're just using celebs as an excuse to have more sex.

YÖRN

When a band goes out on a big tour, there are abundant lures, offers, and enticements. Hox and I faced the same

problem: the strength of our relationship was being put to a test. A horrible, vicious, terrible test. As it turned out, a delightful test.

HOX

At first, I was put off by the blatant nature of the scene. But the more I got to thinking about the possibilities, well, let's just admit that temptation of the flesh is inescapable.

YÖRN

We worked hard to come up with a way to make things work for Hox as well as me. It came down to the selection process. All we had to do is find girls and boys who wanted to do both of us at the same time.

HOX

We did a show in Austin and there were ten men and thirty women in the lobby of our hotel with signs saying “Three!” and “H + Y + Me!” and “Either/Both!”

YÖRN

They were in the mood, I was in the mood, and Hox was in the mood. So, one thing led to two or three things, and those things led to a multiplicity of things, and, before you know it, you've been groupied. I will admit, I sometimes have fond memories of Austin.

MISS TRESS (*Groupie*)

I used to bring along an extra outfit when I was going to do somebody. Boys in bands really get off on getting dressed up as girls.

BELLE (*Groupie*)

So, we had this contest, me and Sally Pucker, and the Twat Twins, who weren't really twins but they dressed alike, and Aly McFeel, and I don't know, a couple others. So, the contest was: "Fox or Not Fox?" We dressed up Hox and Yörn to look like us. I mean, like, really *ready* for it, you know? And then we had a secret ballot.

YÖRN

I had some ballet lessons as a kid so I could strut and pose with the best of ‘em. And I often wear boots onstage, which meant that high heels weren’t a big problem for me. However, the panties were a bit snug. They felt okay at first, but there wasn’t enough “give” in the material when I got aroused. That could have been a problem but it seemed like I wouldn’t have to keep things under wraps for too long... and I was right.

BELLE (Groupie)

Hox was the fox. She was the absolute hottest bitch when we got done dressing her up. I got the next most votes. But Yörn was a close third. We gave prizes to the winners.

HEATHER THE HEATHEN (Groupie)

Okay, but I’m not a groupie.

PATTY CAKE (Former Groupie)

Looking back on it, a lot of the shit we did was pretty twisted. Not with Dh, no,

but for sure with the other bands on the tour.

TICKLE *(Former Groupie)*

Patty Cake and me, we went on tour with Dh one year. We were on the label list. I think they said we were under “traveling expenses,” or something. Anyway, Patty and me tried to do somebody from every band that opened for Dh on that tour. Extra points if we did a gay guy.

PATTY CAKE *(Former Groupie)*

Some of those boys had been working on their fantasy scenes since the day they hit puberty. It got very precise. “Bend your knees and flex your ass when you spread your legs,” and “Wiggle it, but slower,” and “Keep your tongue going counter-clockwise.”

TICKLE *(Former Groupie)*

Some stuff is really fun. And some stuff you just do so you can get to the really fun stuff. But some stuff is bad, you know? Going to the bathroom in front of

a guy is just really weirded out, you know?

HOX

I never got the whole groupie thing. Sure, it's okay if they want to fuck us, but why do they also want to fuck musicians who are mediocre? Why do they want to fuck average actors who just happened to become stars? Also, quite apart from the quality issue, their fixation on musicians and actors is strange. Why aren't groupies interested in being with artists, architects, writers, poets, playwrights, scientists, professors, mathematicians, and doctors?

HEATHER THE HEATHEN (*Groupie*)

Okay, fine. But I'm not a groupie!

CHAPTER 15

CORPORATE SCAVENGING



HOX

We were burnt out.

YÖRN

Put a fork in us, we were done.

HOX

After doing three world tours, one Asian tour, one Africa tour, and five EU tours in seven years without a break, we needed to have some down time.

YÖRN

It was such a luxury to wake up when your sleep cycle was naturally over instead of being roused out of bed at all hours and herded to interviews, planes, busses, photo sessions, travel, sound check, more travel, promo appearances, fan club meetings, still more travel, and the fake-sincere schmoozing with everybody from promoters to marketing mavens to record industry muckity-mucks, to local political dweebs, and god knows what all.

HOX

Now, please don't misunderstand... We were grateful to be able to make music for a living. Absolutely! It was a privilege and an honor. But tours demand the maximum amount of your energy while accounting for every waking moment of what you used to call a life.

YÖRN

For weeks after we stepped off the not-very-merry-go-round of tourhell, I would enjoy a flop-in every morning. That's where you wake up and just look at the light slowly increasing behind the blinds while cuddling the cat and playing with the dog.

HOX

I had forgotten how joyous it was to be able to read poetry while sipping coffee in the morning. Or to make my own breakfast while listening to one of Mozart's piano trios. Or just to sit quietly by myself. Incredible!

YÖRN

We were living apart. We were still a couple but had gone back to dating each other instead of living together.

HOX

A few times a week, Yörn and I would meet at one another's place, get the dogs and cats settled, and play classical music. Or we would play old songs in the style of great composers. "Tea for Two" in the style of Mozart. "Happy Birthday" in the style of Scarlatti. Cole Porter songs in the style of Chopin.

YÖRN

For about six months, we were blissfully happy acting like hermits.

HOX

It was so peaceful.

YÖRN

We decided to assess our finances and see if we could retire.

HOX

The money worked out, so... we bid a fond farewell to the road.

YÖRN

We were happy.

HOX

We were content.

YÖRN

So you can imagine our surprise when someone sent us a news story about our “new album” and our “new sound.” One musician friend of ours texted me her congratulations. The way she put it was, “My compliments on finally finding a way to do strong music that is pretty. And commercial!”

HOX

Apparently, the record label conspired with our manager to find some more music to release to an unsuspecting public. They had everyone rummaging

around in our digital files and eventually they discovered the tracks we made back when we were a totally different band doing totally different music.

YÖRN

The record label position was that when we were called FourFive, we had sometimes gotten close to what they thought was a commercial sound. So they hired some people to take our ten- and twenty-minute goth dirges and turn them into three-minute goth-pop. My email in-box and mobile suddenly filled up with reviews saying things like “Dh Goes Goth” and “From Deep Sludge to Dark Pop.”

HOX

When Yörn told me about it, I was horrified. I was all, “How *dare* they?!” Then I listened to the tracks and it turned out to be fairly pleasant stuff. They were able to extract some actual tunes that were lurking inside the pretentious sonic sculptures we had been creating. I

enjoyed some of it. Of course, it raises questions: Did we play that lick or did a session musician add it to our tracks?

BEN SHAPIRO (*Producer*)

I thought the tracks were brilliant but they were all monstrously long. The shortest one was nine minutes. I took one of them and quickly cut out the extended intro, axed the lengthy solos, and pulled a smash-cut ending before they restated the theme. What was left was about four minutes of 100% pure chocolate-covered goth darkness. I played my quick edit for the label. They were nodding at each other and saying things like, “There’s a market for this.”

MENAHIM YESSIKOFF (*Label Executive*)

We had seen the projected fourth quarter earnings and they were going to be down from the year before. Having Dh stop touring was a blow. And during their tours, they had been great at letting us release live recordings as a kind of “band-approved bootleg” type of thing.

But we needed a boost in sales and we felt that the *Ready For Burning* album might give us that.

JOE ARISTEN (*Label Stockholder*)

We needed product and here was a way to save the label. Can you really blame us for taking this opportunity? It was still music the band had made. And it was very good.

BEN SHAPIRO (*Producer*)

They wanted to know how many more tracks I could get—was there enough for a couple of singles, or an EP, or a full album? I told them to get me a great engineer and together we'd find enough stuff for a single and an EP. I didn't really know if that was true, but hell, Yörn and Hox had recorded about forty or fifty hours of material when they were FourFive—and a lot of it sounded great—so I was pretty sure we could get twenty minutes of good stuff out of that. Turns out, we got more than twenty minutes; we got an entire album.



BUFF *(Mixing Engineer)*

Working with Ben was terrific. He's totally into the feel of the music, which is good, especially since we were invading another musician's work. We wanted to preserve as much of the original tracks as possible.

BEN SHAPIRO *(Producer)*

My agent told me to ask for a producer credit on the project but that would have been ridiculous. We settled on "Reissue

Engineered by Ben ‘The Grave Robber’ Shapiro.” I sent an apology to Yörn and Hox. They were very nice about the whole thing—there were only nine lawsuits. No, I’m kidding. They said we did a good job and thanks.

HOX

The irony is that “Ready For Burning” became our highest-charting release. After that album came out, Yörn and I had to decide if we would go back out on the road as the doom metal Dh or the goth-pop Dh. Good problem to have!

YÖRN

Hox suggested we open our shows as Dh, then bring on FourFive for a set. Intermission. Then come back to close the show as Dh45. She said it would be an “almost super group.”

HOX

As exciting as it sounds to be part of a gargantuan music touring machine, the

bliss of disappearing was too good to pass up. We decided to go missing.

YÖRN

Both of us wanted to avoid the slog of tour life. We had gone through half a decade where we always had to think about the band, the instruments, the transportation, the music arrangements, the amps, the lights, the props, the clothing, the roadies, the FOH, the busses, the tour staff, the promotion, writing new songs... I could go on. Life on tour is life cut off from reality. You're pampered, but you're also hermetically sealed into a plastic bubble. Now, away from tourhell, it was such a relief being able to control the moments of your life. Of course, you never know when there will be that urge to perform...

HOX

We may jazz up a few classical tunes and go play them in coffeehouses...

CHAPTER 16
BACKPATS & BRICKBATS



RICH PAUL (*Maximum*)

“Judging by the sonic conflagration visited upon us last night at the Omni, there are four members in this three-piece band: keyboardist, guitarist, violinist, and the god of sound.”

GORDON JANIS (*NYTime*)

“Pardon me while I peel my ears off the ceiling.”

JONAH STEIN (*Eye*)

“Blast furnace intensity that never lets up. See this act if what you want in music is turbulence, vehemence, passion, and menace.”

CARL WILLMINGTON (*Press International*)

“They wreak their havoc with a calm majesty. Hox looks serene and Yörn appears amused as they commit assault on your equilibrium.”

MAYBRIT WEILL (*Berliner Avantgarde*)

“This band caresses you, envelops you, fondles you, slaps you, and then says,

‘You like this and you’ll come back for more.’ I am not in the habit of suggesting restriction in the arts, but it must be pointed out that DANGERhOX may well be hazardous to children and small animals.”

GERI COWPER (*Netbuzz*)

“Their sonic onslaught casts spells of witchcraft and voodoo.”

ROMO VIGLIELMO, Ph.D. (*The Way*)

“After experiencing a DANGERhOX concert, it is clear that their music will profoundly affect the population in a manner that will concern the religious cognoscenti: Sinners shall be Sanctified and the Sanctified shall be Sinners.”

JOSEPH BERG (*Playcast*)

“The power of a thousand freight trains hauling ass up the track and across the plains by the light of the full moon. The sound of galaxies making love in the cosmos. They are the epicenter in a Venn diagram of expanding consciousness and

contracting morality. Theirs is the glory of transporting dead souls to Valhalla.”

JON JOHNSON (*World Online*)

“I found the world to be blissful and beautiful as soon as they were through cauterizing my cranium.”

GARY PYRCE (*Pitchback*)

“Proud and loud, but also dreary, sleazy, weary, and cheesy.”

WALT SCANLON (*Sputterfish*)

“Everything, as it turns out, is just too much.”

JANIS AMY (*Wire Net*)

“Powerful enough to frighten the dead.”

CECILY MAPLES (*Delight*)

“Demonstrating that more is less.”

OPAHLA MERCY (*The Street*)

“A dentist’s drill in one ear and a jackhammer in the other.”

P.J. O'BRIEN (CCE News)

“This is a con job. Anyone can do what they do. These mountebanks simply create feedback loops between their instruments and their amplifiers, set their keyboards to repeat arpeggios endlessly, and synch everything to a drum pattern. After creating a nimiety of noise, they step away from the stage and wait to see if their audio apocalypse shakes the building off its foundation. Take the first part of their name seriously.”

JIMMY RAY FILMBUFF (Scene Ezine)

“Before seeing DANGERhOX, there were many deep philosophical questions that plagued my mind. After seeing DANGERhOX, the questions remain, but the answers no longer concern me because now I am ready for the end of humankind on the planet, tra-la.”

APPENDIX
DISCOGRAPHY



**THE MEET CUTE AT THE MEAT MARKET
BOYCOTT ON BOYLSTON HEIGHTS CHA-
CHA-CHA**

Online only

Self-released

Studio Recording

“The Meet Cute...” 7:08

*Dh occasionally released new mixes,
each time adding another “Cha.”*

TUNES FOR IMPORTANT EVENTS

Online only

Self-released

Studio Recordings

“Music for Breakfast” 9:33

“Music for Brushing Your Teeth” 3:11

“Music for Reading Poetry” 7:13

“Music for Thinking About Monsters”
3:02

“Music for Taking Part in Community
Meetings Where People are Working to
Defeat Whatever Rightwing Nutjob
Douchebag is Currently Running for
Election” 11:51

“Music for Fucking” 55:27

OUR PRETTY OBLIVION

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 5058

Studio Recordings

A: “Our Pretty Oblivion” 11:17

B: “Some Wombats are Sweeter than Others” 3:07 / “Trailer Park Sex” 2:14 / “I Spent a Year of my Life in Nashville Last Weekend” 3:48 / “White Noise or Wind in the Trees?” 2:09

Side B had track separations but the music ran continuously.

Initial copies had a pink-and-black “Fight for Human Rights, Damn It!” sticker on the reverse.

MOVE LOVE FORWARD

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 5293

Studio Recordings

A: “Move Love Forward” 10:04

B: “The Catholic Church is a Global Pedophile Society” 2:57 / “Squirrels Are Rats with Cute Tails” 2:14 / “Pardon Me, But Your Face is Repeatedly Striking

My Fists” 2:28 / “It’s Not a Person if it’s
a Republican” 2:49

Initial copies were on pink vinyl.

MOVE LOVE FORWARD, PTS. 1 & 2

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 5664

Live Recording

A: “Move Love Forward, Pt. 1” 10:44
(with Edward W. Hardy, violin)

B: “Move Love Forward, Pt. 2” 9:58
(with Isabel Leonard, mezzo-soprano)

TRACKS OF MY TEARS

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 5834

Live Recordings

A: Cover of “Tracks of My Tears” 8:56
(with Cee-lo Green, vocals)

B: “Absolution Solution” 4:46 / “Luv”
3:42 / “When You Catch a Conservative
Saying Something Stupid (Which is
Whenever They’re Talking) it is Not an
Infringement of Free Speech to Point
Out They’re Just Fucking Wrong” 2:12

First printing had a red and white “Thx CEE-LO Green!” sticker on the reverse.

AMAZED BY THE LIGHT THAT IS YOU

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 6383

Live Recordings

A: Cover of “Amazed by the Light that is You” 7:47 (with the Cecilia Robinson Gospel Choir)

B: “Jesus Guided Me” 6:05 (with the Cecilia Robinson Gospel Choir) / “Paper Moon” 2:05 (with Cecilia Robinson, vocals)

FANTASIA IN C, OP. 80

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 6788

Live Recording

A: “Fantasia in C, Op. 80, Pt. 1” (Beethoven) 9:07 (with the Vancouver Chamber Orchestra & Chorus)

B: “Fantasia in C, Op. 80, Pt. 2” (Beethoven) 9:19 (with the Vancouver Chamber Orchestra & Chorus)

...AND GUILLOTINES

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 7082

Studio Recording

A: “Coffee Beans, Bluejeans, Mob Scenes, Drag Queens, Smokescreens, Collard Greens, and Guillotines” 10:01

B: “I Have Not So Too Drink Too Much Yet” 7:23

With members of the FLUX String Quartet and the Scrap Arts Music Percussion Ensemble.

THE ONSET OF THE START OF THE BEGINNING OF THE COMENCEMENT OF THE INCEPTION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE CREATION

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 7324

Studio Recording

A: “The Onset...” 10:07

B: “The Upset of the Smart Set” 10:59

KNEE DEEP MINE SWEEP TIME KEEP LOVER’S LEAP

CD

DUC 8087

Live Recordings

- 1: “Knee Deep...” 37:03 (With Yo-Yo Ma, cello)
2. “Lincoln Division of Ford Motor Company” 8:33 (With the Tenterhook Chamber Symphony)
3. “Someday my Blintz Will Come” 13:55 (With Mavis Studer, soprano)
- 4: “Greed is the One True God of Conservatism” 11:31 (With members of WXYZED and Kingdom of Gray)

THE SINGLES

CD

DUC 82000

Studio Recordings

Collection produced by Jimmy Mack
Single disc with all official singles. In the EU, a 2-CD version was available; the second disc contained alternate takes.

THE REMIXES

CD

DUC 82431

Studio Recordings

Collection curated and produced by
Sylvia D'Adobo

—“Our Pretty O, Pretty O, Oblivion (Dr.
Zoom Remix)” 9:35

—“Mambo Mumbo Jumbo (Move Love
Forward)” J'lai Malachi Mix 13:25

—“Amazing Light Fantastic” Anotha
Pin ‘em to tha Wall Production 10:54

—“Fantasia” Hox Fucked Up Mix 9:52

—“...And Guillotines” Thrombosis Mix
6:57

—“The Onset” Crush Daddy Mix 3:32

—“Knee Deeper: Kill Conservatards
Remix” 4:02

*Issued with a glow-in-the-dark cover for
DJs.*

OFFICIAL BOOTLEG

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 8323

Live Recordings

A: “Note to Self: Breathing is Good For
You” 10:02

B: “The Dweeb I Work For is Worse
Than the Dweeb You Work For” 8:31

DRONE ODE

12-inch 45rpm 180 gram

DUC 9339

Studio Recordings

A: “Drone Ode” (From *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* by Krzysztof Penderecki) 9:59 *Featuring members of the Kronos Quartet and the Jocelyn Pook Ensemble.*

B: “CPEB” (Themes from Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach) 7:56

Featuring members of the Jocelyn Pook Ensemble.

SALUTE TO OUR ISSEI, NISEI, AND SANSEI FRIENDS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH THEIR ROCK ‘N’ ROLL HAIRCUTS, YOU BET

Flash Drives

Dh Private Release 001

Studio Recording

“Salute To Our Issei, Nisei, and Sansei Friends, Especially Those with Their Rock ‘N’ Roll Haircuts, You Bet”
27:08:26

CODA

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



JOHN SCOTT G

Every day, I lock myself in a room that has double-pane windows, sound insulation, and filtered air; in the room with me are two word processors, one coffee maker, and a powerful audio system—truly, a writer’s dream. Now, as for the recent scandalous rumors... yes, I admit to sending threatening letters to almost all of the animated characters appearing in children’s cartoon shows. My actions in this matter are entirely justifiable. They know what they did.



JohnScottG.com