

SIDE ONE.

① INCONCLUSIVE

The merest germ of an idea
Invades the shadow of my fear,
Unbidden in my hidden zones:
The mind I want no one to know.

Well it doesn't really matter if I know that it's not real,
'Cause I cannot hope to think away the feelings that I feel,
As the vinegar and the baking soda mixed up in my brain
Bubble up, explode, and I just go away.

The tension coiled up in me
Asserts itself disastrously.
Should I hang on? Well I don't know.
Then impotently letting go....

My mind's in overdrive, and I can't catch my breath.
I'm choking on my tongue: a little taste of Death.
I thought up my last thought, the next one is elusive.
Am I alive or dead right now? Inconclusive.

When I come to, I'm soaking wet,
And my anxiety is spent.
I wonder as I close the vault:
Will I withstand the next assault?

② MAN WITHOUT A HEART

You can't reach me, but it's not your fault:
I was born with nothing for a heart.
Wire-monkey mother cuddled me,
Thus imparting no humanity.

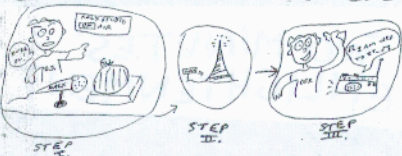
Every thing I ever did was wrong.
Don't know why I ever tried at all.

Love is water, rolling off my back.
I would drown before I'd take a sip.
If you want to save me, you can try.
This is no SOS, it's goodbye.

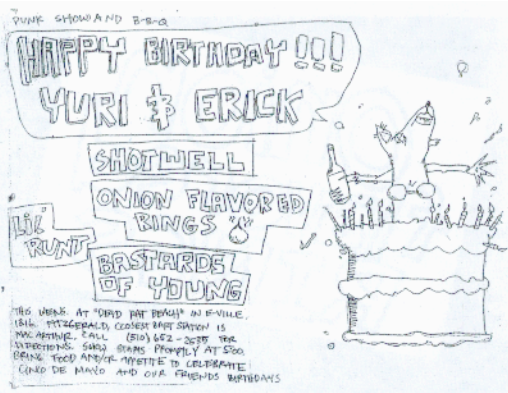
It's always something more, or something less,
or something in between,
Something I am unprepared to be.
Alienated, ill-adapted, and sadly, ill-conceived,
It's for the best, if there is one less of me.

I'll assassinate your fondest dream,
Smother every idealistic scheme.
Going down, I'll take you if I can:
Empty heart, with no regard for Man.

ONION FLAVORED RADIO



ONION FLAVORED RINGS PLAY LIVE
ON KALX 90.7
SATURDAY MAY 17TH 9:30 PM!



③ VIRGINITIES

I was a boy,
And it was time for takin' chances,
It was time for growin' up.

I got a girl,
And it was true love everlasting,
Up until she broke it off.

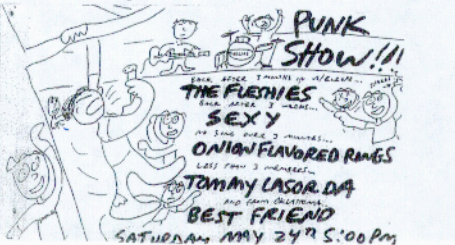
It would not have occurred to me
From hearing teenage history
That you could lose virginity
Again and again!

I got a job.
The deal was: work an honest day,
And in return, a living wage.
I was a fool.
I gotta bust my ass around the clock,
And still live like a slave.

I thought by now I would finally understand it,
Or at the least, that I would no longer care.
I can't believe I can still feel this frustration.
I can't believe I could so completely fail.

And what's ahead of me:
A life exactly like this,
Up until the day I close my eyes.
As Death deflowers me,
Can I at least console myself
That it's the final time?

Or will it not occur to me
From seeing my own history
That I have lost virginity
Again and again?



④ LIFE IN THE BOX

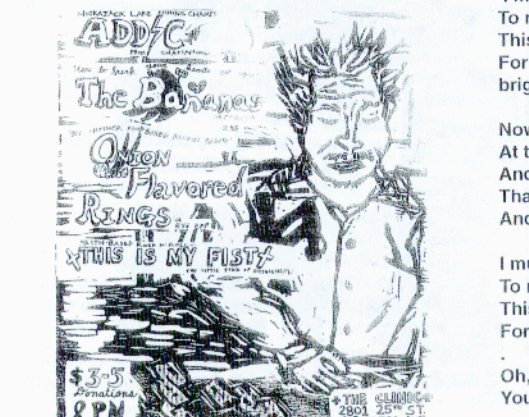
If you--had to live inside a box,
And you--couldn't go outside to play,
And life--revealed itself as suffering,
You wouldn't know another way.

If you--could meditate inside a box,
And come--to terms with existential woes,
You'd see--the pointlessness of craving freedom,
And then ascend to the next Bardo.

You believe that it's wrong, that freedom is
Diminished when immured,
As if to say that we don't share that fate.
Could it be a kind of liberty
To have one purpose in life,
Even as a morsel on a plate?

We're just--living in a bigger box,
Do we--have any right to claim we're free?
Our souls--are captives in this worldly prison:
We live and die, so the worms can feed.

You believe that it's wrong, that freedom is
Diminished when immured,
And that might be true, in the here-and-now.
When you've seen it philosophically,
When your spirit has matured,
You'll lose your faith in the myth of sacred cows.



⑤ VENUS

I know I'm unattractive,
I guess it's sad but true.
I thought it wouldn't matter.
Okay, I'm stupid, too,
For thinking you could love me
For the person on the inside.

Girl, you are so attractive.
How can you be so mean?
You're such a little actress:
You love just to deceive.
But this I couldn't see,
Till I saw the person inside.

Was I bad to you?
Why you bad to me?

If lies were beauty you would be Venus de Milo.
They say that looks don't count for much.
(That's what they say.)
And I believed it so it shows how little I know.
Now I can't believe I'd walk away
From Venus de Milo.

Okay, I'm unattractive.
But, well, then so are you.
And we both have our good points,
But taken through and through,
I think I'd just as soon avoid the ugly person
Inside of you.

⑥ POSITIVELY TREAT STREET

You always laugh at me behind my back.
There's a piece of soul you seem to lack.
It's obvious to me,
That where you want to be,
Is being begged by me to take me back.

Your power trip must thrill you like a drug,
'Cause you're all charged up when you pull the plug.
I guess I expected more,
'Cause when you slammed the door,
You barely even made me want to shrug.

I much more than others always thought you had the right,
To reinvent yourself and then get on with your new life.
This is not assertiveness, it's cowardice's height.
For someone always called a genius, you're just...not too bright.

Now you're getting older and you're weak.
At the end of all your winning streaks.
And you'll never reach the height,
That once thrilled your acolytes,
And failure is the opus you'll achieve.

I much more than others always thought you had the right,
To reinvent yourself and then get on with your new life.
This is not assertiveness, it's cowardice's height.
For someone always called a genius, you turned out to be...
such a bore.
Oh, yeah, listen to me snore.
You laughed at me...I'm laughing more!



SIDE TWO:

① TO THE GRAVE!

You'd never tell me; you'd rather kill me.
You want to take it to the grave.
The game we're playin', oh, we keep delayin',
Like we've got dignity to save.

It's not like you could ever ask me
To get out of here.
It's not like you could disappear,
'Cause I'll always be part of you
Like you'll always be part of me.

We take our purpose from the things that hurt us,
And we're the same down to a fault.
I guess your conscience tells you that you want this,
And we continue with the waltz.

What started as philosophy
Is now a tragic joke.
We'd fix it but it isn't broke,
Because it gives us what we want,
But never gives us what we need.

I can see, looking in your eyes,
The feeling you're feeling.
But I can't make you recognize,
Instead, you conceal it.

We stay divided, we never fight it,
Between embracing and release.
Now we're both wary, it's involuntary,
We won't surrender to make peace.

What's right or wrong
Is never long considered by our kind,
Defeat is something we don't mind,
As long as we deprive the other
Every single victory.

Can't you see, looking in my eyes,
I'm feeling your feeling?

② DOWN (SEE REBUS!)

③ HARD TO TELL

It's hard to tell, it's hard to tell, as she holds me to her chest,
If love is something she can only get from someone else.
Looking out my window, happy couples all around.
Wonder why, I wonder why I have to do without.

Such a tired story, I've been living it too long.
Watching love evaporate, I wonder what went wrong.
Every word from her mouth tumbles out like a cliché.
First she rips my heart out, then she has the nerve to say...

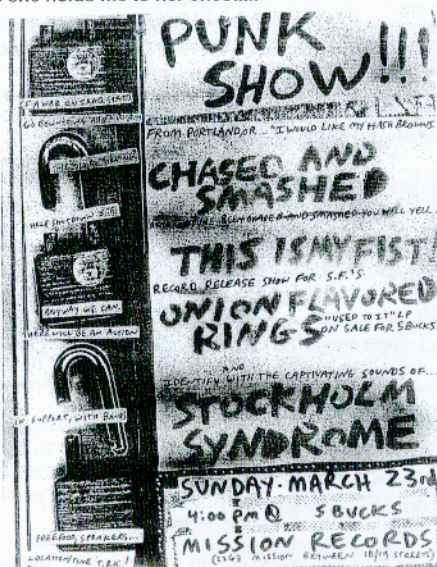
She regrets
My romantic obsolescence.
She says she
Knows that we
Will always be
The best of friends.

Such a tired story, she'll be living all her life.
Watching love evaporate, she'll lie awake at night.
Maybe she'll look back on this as her tragic mistake. Then
she'll know the pain I know, when it's her own heart that
breaks.

She'll regret
Her romantic obsolescence,
She'll wish she'd
Never wanted to be
Nothing more than friends.

Lessons learned in youth:
Some are lies and some are truth.
It's easy now to say I've figured it out,
But every now and then,
I do it all again.

And it's hard to tell, it's hard to tell,
As she holds me to her chest....



④ TWO MINUTES' ENLIGHTENMENT

I boil it down, make it simple as I want to.
I stack the deck, and I'm holding all the aces.
Then you're all straw-men, and I've got you where I
want you:
Awaiting me to put you all in your places.

I never had much more than two minutes'
enlightenment,
I never had much more than that to say.
But if it's smooth and fast enough,
You'll just assume I know my stuff, and....

And not a word is coming off the top of my head.
I haven't got the wits with which to engage in battle.
They come to me when I'm laying down in my bed,
But I won't risk a drop of blood upon my saddle.

In a moment of crisis,
You're listening to me.
My rhetoric of devices crumbles
Under weight of your reality.

Don't wanna be no one's object of correction.
I'll make mistakes, but nobody's gonna see me.
I hone my words with the object of perfection,
And utter them with the passion of machinery.

I will turn and smirk, and walk away
(Because I can)
'Cause I never had much more than
Two minutes' enlightenment.

⑤ 12:05 TONIGHT

Tonight could be the night, one night it will be,
When all the seeds of my destruction bloom and kill me.
You think you're innocent? You're an accomplice.
You're just as much to blame as any other illness.

Your open hand doesn't make the situation better;
Was once a fist, and I'm not a very good forgetter.

I stand inside a pit, only one way out.
For now I'll persevere to see how all this plays out.
Alone inside my mind, and on the outside.
Born into all of this with no hope to find out why.

Your bleeding heart doesn't offer any reassurance;
Your fake concern is a not infrequent reoccurrence.

You know there's light?
I can't see it from here.
Day comes from night.
Not after so many years.

I stare into the dark, the crimson numbers,
Advance relentlessly, indifferent as I slumber.
The race is winding down, I see the finish.
Each day I feel the will to persevere diminish.

I feel my mind in the grip of existential torture.
The open grave is the only thing I've ever worked for.

You know there's light?
I can't see it from here.
Day comes from night.
Not after so many years.
You know you're right?
Well, it's not like "hooray!"
So say good night.
And now I'm going away.

Tonight will be the night....

⑥ LAUGHING

I cannot hear them laugh at me;
I never could before.
It never meant that much to me...to be...
An object of scorn.

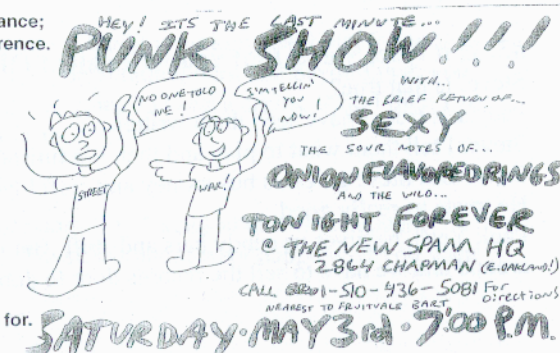
And although, you might believe that I'm still nursing
every ache,
Well, I know you never get to give back all the shit you
take.

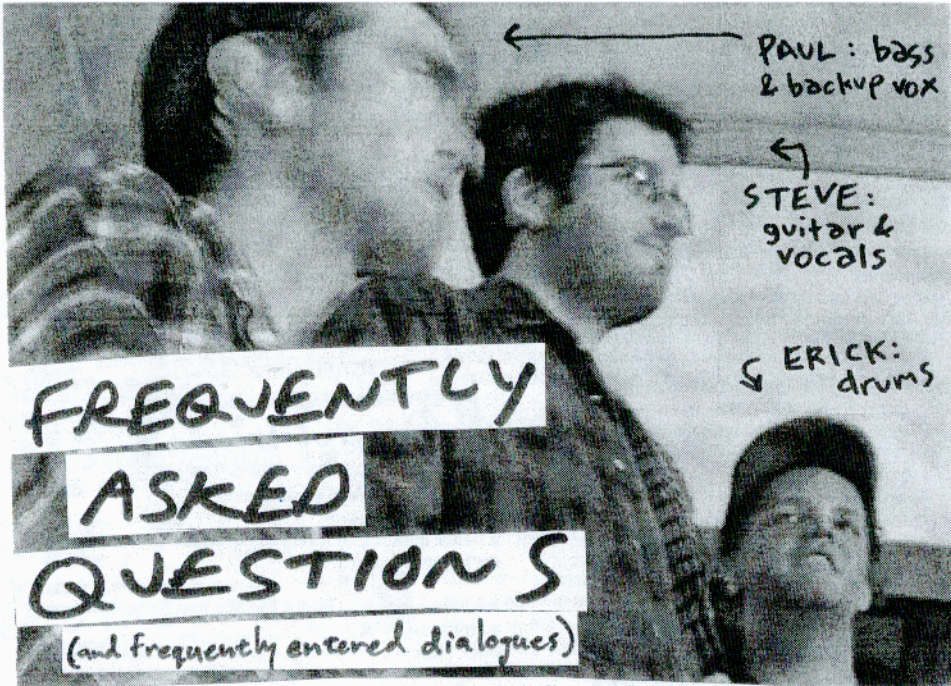
I cannot see them smirk at me;
I know they always did.
It never meant a thing to me:
I never gave a shit.

One million miles and many years away,
I stand here,
Still, I'm immune to anything you say
And every day since then I lived the life I always
wanted to.
And I never for one minute wished I could be more
like you....

They never saw me smirk at them,
No matter how they stared.
And even if they heard me laugh,
I know they wouldn't care.

You always thought you were so tough,
You're not, you don't have what it takes.
You'll never have the guts to hate like the way I
hate myself.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (and frequently entered dialogues)

OFR RESPONDS TO LISTENERS' COMMON CONCERNS

#1. Hey OFR! How long will it be before artificial intelligence surpasses human intelligence?
Erick: Look, Steve's tired of the science questions. Give the guy a break. He can't help every punk kid in America with their homework.

#2. What's the deal with the song title inconsistencies?
Paul: Erick has no respect for Steve's song titles.
Steve: He just freely retitles songs. Often connoting contrary meanings.
Erick: You've been in a band before, right? At practice, you don't always go, "Let's play 'The Song Title.'" You might say, "Let's play 'Ole Nah Neeh Nah.'" Every Los Canadian song title was just, like, the song's notes.
Steve: EGAC, for instance.
Is that "I'm Such an Idiot?"
Erick: Yeah. It has a hidden liberation message, because it's "CAGE" in reverse. It is opening the cage.

#3. Is it true, Steve, that you write all of OFR's songs?
Steve: Is that true?
Paul: It's true; I have seen them written.
Steve: I tell them what to play and then it's finished!
Erick: But Steve gives us bus money and stuff like that. He's actually really cool to us. He treats us really good.
Paul: Yeah, he gives us candy bars and stuff. But it kind of sucks when he drives us around and we have to sell the records door to door.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM INTERVIEWS BY ARMEN CUREY IN MAXIMUM ROCK N ROLL AND DAN MODERU MACHINES IN NOISE, NOISE, NOISE.

#4. This may be an amateur point of view, but let me just put it out there and you guys can respond: The basic laws of Physics are well understood and not many people are trying to improve on them.
Steve: Improve on them?! You'd have to raise the speed limit on light!

But Quantum Physics, on the other hand, takes things to a slightly different realm. It sort of expands physics to the realm of the metaphysical. Am I right? It engages a level of mystery in the laws of Physics.
Steve: That's true, but do you know why? We're not ready to understand it. Human beings have not evolved to the point where the apparent paradoxes of Physics are palatable and easily grasped. Maybe in a hundred years.

So Quantum Physics is only a glimpse into some future understanding? It's a sort of unformed acceptance that there is a realm that we don't understand?
Steve: I think maybe some people do, or at least they know what the rules are, and they're not baffled when these weird things happen on the subatomic level. But human beings just aren't ready. It's only been a hundred years, you know? I bet the first guy who figured out how to make fire scared the shit out of everyone around him. I have a degree in Physics and I thought when I went to school that I was going to learn how everything in the universe worked.

Sure, of course.
Steve: I thought that I wouldn't have to rely on religion, or whatever other things people have to tell themselves to try to understand the world. What I discovered was that, metaphorically, you're at the center of something when you're born, and you have this journey toward the horizon where you're going to understand everything and the horizon is the same for everyone. It's like this circle an infinite distance away, and if you get to it or not—whether you believe in Psychology or English Literature or Physics or Chemistry, whatever—it's still the same circle.
Erick: Wait...are you talking about an actual race to the circle or are you talking about Achilles and The Tortoise again?
Paul: Don't get me started on Achilles!

It always seemed to me that Physics is, at least, a fairly unambiguous way to try to understand the world.
Steve: That's not true, though. The difficulty is that it is ambiguous. I just found that there ended up being a limit to where your understanding was, and beyond that, you just had to sort of believe that everything was going to keep working. And I didn't see how that was different than believing in Jesus.

To some degree, you resort to faith.
Steve: Exactly. So I asked one of my professors, "Is Physics about what happens, or about why things happen?" And he said, "Physics is about *what* happens. If you want *why*, go to church."
Erick: And that's how punk rock was born.

#5. Is there a political element (that you are trying to spread)?

Erick: I thought about this situation today. I walked down to Mission Records and saw sixty people, all under 18, that I've never seen before. I was thinking about it—that this is an entry level for ideas of community and political change. A lot of people who become activists came out of punk rock. You demonstrate to people how things work in the underground, and maybe it goes somewhere or maybe it doesn't. Not everybody sticks around. As a band, we don't play bars or over-21 clubs and shitty shows like that. We try to keep everything really DIY, though the lyrics aren't overtly political in nature or anything. And I feel that's fine. I'd be upset to be held to some kind of lyrical standard, when we practice things that way. Of those sixty kids, some of them will go on to fight for the cause at some later date.

Or at least go into Physics.

Steve: Or leave it.

#6. There is a sort of nihilistic streak that comes across in your songs.

Erick: That's scientific.

Steve: It's doom, yeah.

Erick: I would say, before Steve answers, that for some reason politics came up in this interview and I think there is a political versus scientific schism in the band—or in the world.

Steve: I like to address the futility of both science and politics.

That idea of science intersecting with politics—or punk—is one of the more unusual things about OFR.

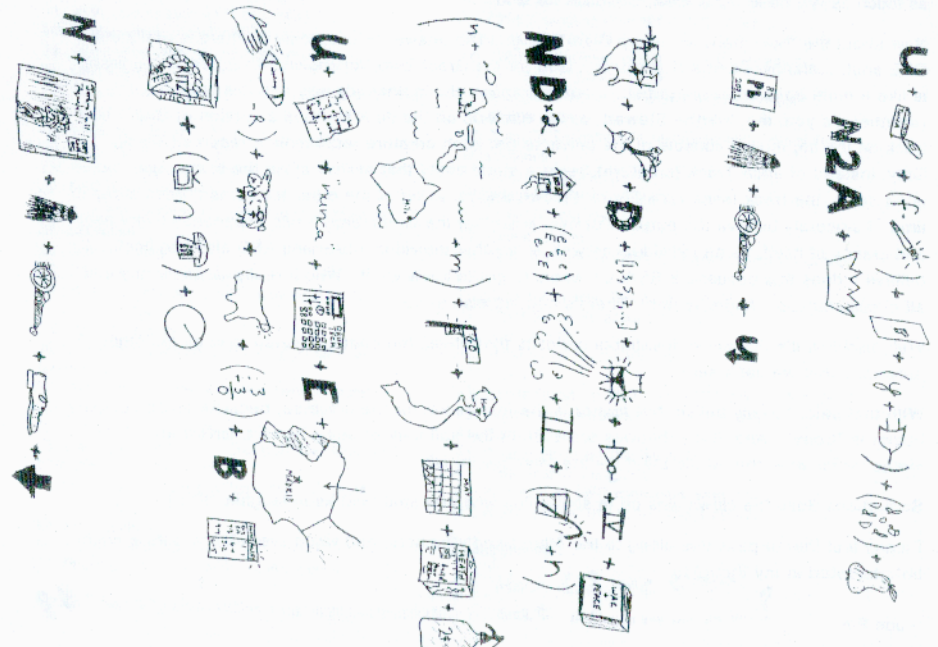
Erick: Ok, but remember a time when *punk* was nihilistic?

That's not the contradiction for me. The contradiction lies in the Physics.

Steve: It's probably Physics that convinced me we were doomed.



Time to put on your thinking cap! The lyrics to "Down!" are enciphered in this rebus. Start here →



A LETTER FROM JOE PIE

(OF THE POP-O-PIES!)

Hey, I just got the "Onion Flavored Rings" CD and listened to it several times today. But OK, to cut to the chase, and REALLY answer the question "how DID we crawl out of chaos?", here's my take on it...

About 10 years ago, I did a 3 day tap water fast. That's subsisting on nothing but tap water for 3 days (while living in the Tenderloin in San Fran). Sounds like a recipe for a strange trip, and indeed it was. I was actually trying to be frugal, 'cause at the time I was kinda broke, but never mind that. One of the questions I was trying to answer for myself was "just how many souls (sentient beings) are there in the universe? Is there a finite number? or is it infinite? And if so, just how does that work? And while I was on the subject, remember that one they asked in high school, "do dogs and cats have souls?" Well all kidding aside, here's what I came up with...

In the begining there was absolutely nothing. Yes. But in order for nothing to define itself (exist) there had to be something that is everthing else but nothing, and Viola! here we (it) all are.

Now this is really high level but, there really IS NOTHING, and all this something that we see and are, is really made out of a lot of nothing-ness. For example: if you look at a molecule, you'll see a bunch of somethings surrounded by nothing. then if you look at one of those somethings, it to, is made of somethings surrounded by nothing. and if you look at one of THOSE somethings, IT TO is made up of somethings surrounded by nothing, ect, ect... Now, if we had the hardware that was sophisticated enough, you could just keep going down & down, until you see nothing, and Voila! There you have it, I rest my case. Oh, and in a somewhat unrelated point, this is what prompts me to believe, at some level inside the micro universe is where the edge of the macro universe is.

OK, now heres where it's gets good. About this "what is God" business, and "how many souls are there" thing.

Well, whether you're a Pagan (like I am), & see God as Nature, or you see IT as a sentient being, it really makes no difference. Here's why... ..and before I go any further, I want you to know I put no boundaries between sprituality and science. What God is, is a zero dimensional creature: IT has no length, no width, no depth, and doesn't even exist in a chronilological time like we Earthlings do. IT, is this great nothing, that I referred to earlier. WE are it's reflection. IT needs us to exists, just as much as WE need IT, to exist. So much for God.

Now about the "how many souls are there" thing... The answer to this riddle is, there is really only ONE soul. ...and here's how that works... God (or the Great Zero Dimensional Creature, if you wish) is like a multi track recording artist... ..each creature that's finds it's way into this universe, (whether it's you, me, Martha Stewart, or the bacteria on the door knob) is a version of God, or a track on the big mixing console of the universe (ie: each creature represents a recorded Track) Only, instead of each Track (creature) being a static entity that always stays the same once you lay it down, the track takes on a life of it's own and plays off of the other tracks as it goes along in time. I sincerely believe the purpose of this, is so that the God creature can experience every nook and cranny of itself, as an individual as well as another individual observing AND affecting itself. I believe it does this because it REALLY wants to get to know itself. Who it really is, under any and all circumstances. And why not? There's nothing else to do.

Well, perhaps it's this pesky insatiable curiosity that drives the enitre universe (and all the other universes that we can't see).

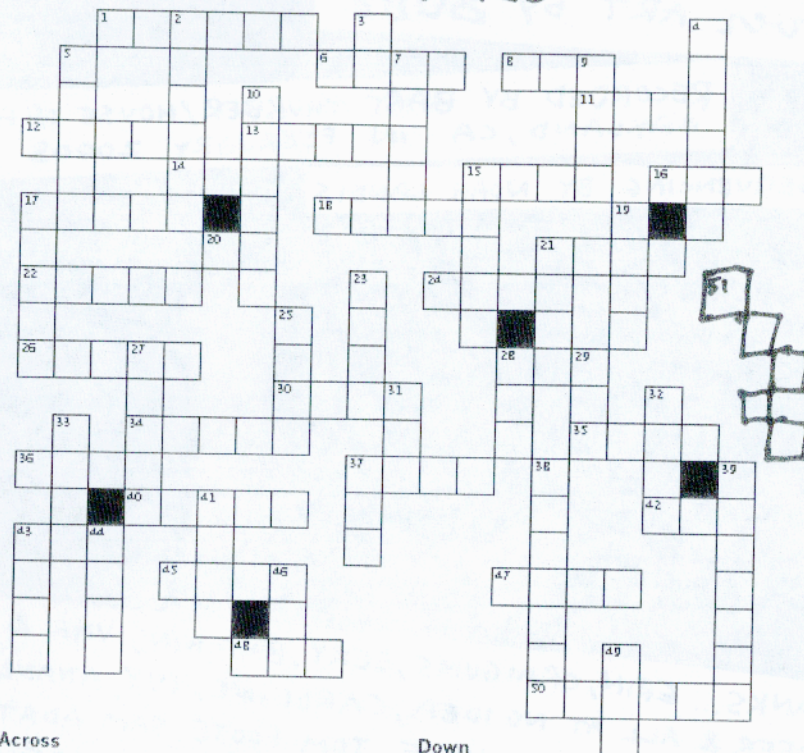
With that said, I truely belive that humor is the foundation for the universe, because at it's core, humor is "Irony". And, if my theories are even in the ball park of being correct, isn't Irony a metaphor for what this whole thing we are, and live in, is?

So perhaps Bozo the clown was on to something when he said "just keep laughin' !!!" :)

Please feel free to pass this along to the other band members, and whomever else you think might be interested in my thoughts.

-- Joe Pie

Two MINUTES



Across

1. Oregon town OFR can't seem to play
6. What can she only get from someone else?
8. This is no ... it's goodbye!
11. OFR Packologist
12. Paul resuscitated MAXIMUMROCKNROLL
13. ... Elvis Costello said it twice.
14. Featured on first OFR record cover
15. What your open hand once was
16. OFR's Area
17. This OFR member's parents have neither seen nor heard them.
18. Erick and Steve met in ... FL
20. Sexy, do ya hear ... ?
21. The only good milkmen
22. OFR Setlistologist
24. Number of OFR members with mohawks
26. Drummer
28. One in Cuba
30. The merest germ of an...
34. MRR's interview of OFR was written by ... Curry
35. square or cube
36. Word pronounced differently by OFR and Television
37. Band OFR toured with last time around
40. Sabbath's 'Naut
42. I laugh when puppies ...
43. Caroline stabs ... Bush in the neck on OFR/Bitchin' split 7" cover
45. We take our purpose from the things that ... us.
47. Erick's zine
48. In, but base 10
50. Record Label for Split 7" (two words)

Down

2. Book OFR read on last tour: "You Can't ... Again"
3. Future
4. 924 ... Street
5. We're only ... in human form
7. Bar OFR played at in Eureka, CA: The ...
9. Steve's singing is around 30% pure ... (rhymes with "shit")
10. OFR sometimes plays sidewalk shows on ... Street in SF
15. Pictured with Erick on OFR/Bitchin split 7"
17. Guitar Player
19. This OFR member's family attends most Bay Area shows
21. Let it drag you...
23. What Pollyannas try to give you
25. Official OFR Roadie
27. Crawl Out of...
28. One of many makers of generic onion flavored rings
29. Onion Flavored Rings (abbrev.)
31. Treat Street is actually Treat ...
32. Not Bombs
33. Monkey of ineffectacious cuddling
37. Vicious
38. Other Band on 2003 Split 7" "Yeehaw Junction"
39. Paul's Home Town: ... CA
41. Bass Player
43. Wheat-germ-eating Ramone
44. This record's engineer
46. Number of OFR members who drive
49. A Joe who wrote to us about chaos

Diagonal!

51. How did we crawl out of ...?

Stuck? See <http://onionflavoredrings.com/puzzle>

COVER ART BY IVY!

RECORDED BY BART THURBER/HOUSE OF FAITH
OAKLAND, CA IN FEBRUARY 2000S

SEQUENCING BY NOAH LANDIS

THANKS... ERIN, CRAIGUMS, SEXY, BITCHIN', VAR &
JENNIFER & ALL AT NO IDEA, CAROLINE, IVY, ANANDI,
ANTONIO, ARWEN, CINQUE, TOM FOOTE, SAM ADATO,
MODERN MACHINES, ALL YOU CAN EAT, CARRIE NATIONS,
THE BANANAS, CLEVELAND CRACK SMOKERS, THE CHRIST-
IAN BAND WE STOLE A FUSE FROM IN CHATTANOOGA,
ICKY, BEER GARDEN, REN, MIKE TAYLOR, YVETTE,
TERRY JOHNSON, FARRAH IN D.C., JASON IN ATHENS,
MIKEY MIND, SWEETTOOTH, ARIEL, AND EACH OTHER

WRITE TO US!

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