

#PARTISANS

our favour. We get offered some shit deals, and we have learned that just cos a record label is "Do it Yourself" or "Punk", does not mean to say that they will give you a fair and honest deal. We have been on the biggest punk labels of the eighties and to be honest they work on the same level as the majors. A contract is a contract. No Future sucked and they were supposed to be for the

The Partisans have always been one of my favorite bands. Their song "17 Years of Hell" was one of the most played songs on my radio show in the 80s. Many of their songs were requested on my radio show, back in the day. They have returned with a new EP that I must have listened to 20 times in a row. I conducted the following interview via email with guitarist Andy.

FOE The song "17 years of Hell" and your self titled debut LP were released approximately 19 years ago. How did the second 17 years go by in comparison to the first 17?

ANDY The second 17 years of hell, pretty much like the first in fact. Just got fatter and older, which made them in a way, harder than the first (tee hee). No but its not really that bad, and the first 17 years were not that bad really, its just a teenage angst song, everything is shit when you are like between 13 and 19. All those over active hormones play hell with you both mentally and physically.

FOE You have made it known that you were unaware of your continued popularity. How did you not know? How did you find out that you were still popular?

ANDY We lost interest in the punk movement, we liked the early punk stuff, and we were more interested in what Mick Jones and Strummer were developing into, and were just tired of the cliched punk stuff that was coming out around 84-85, and like all the early fans wanted to hear "Police Story", and didn't like "The Time Was Right", so we just thought it was pointless playing to an audience who were under the illusion that punk started in 81. The reason that we had no idea of our popularity was due to the fact that we didn't feel that we could relate to the punk movement anymore. As the song "Only 21" was trying to point out, that punk was a cliché, the clothes, the attitude, the music. And as a result we turned our backs on it, cos it was not a movement going forward, it was stagnant, and full of copy cats. It was only when we did a web site just for the fun of it, that we got loads of emails and stuff, and everyone wanted us to get back together that we realized that we were popular again, but now we are in the same position as we were back in 84. We have seen lots of the new generation of punks, putting us down, old men trying to cash in and make money, and the new songs are not as good as the old. Fuck what ever you do in a punk band you can't win. First, they want to see you play and then they put you down for it. What the hell do these people want, maybe some of these punkers that like to put bands down for selling out or what ever should get off their working class arses and do something new and exciting instead.

FOE Weren't you receiving any money for the reissues on Link, Captain Oi or Visionary Vinyl? Do you know how many copies of your records you have sold? Will you now be receiving money from your releases?

ANDY We do get royalties for records, but nothing that indicates that we are big and sell lots of records, its a very, very small amount, doesn't even keep us in guitar strings. We worked out that all together with all the compilations we have sold over 250,000 records, it's not that many really. As regards receiving money for anything new we do, well we are much wiser now and we do not sign anything unless its in

kids. They sold us on to other companies, so much for the punk ethic. We don't even own our songs. Street Punk rules yea (sarcastic).

FOE When the band dissolved in 1985, did you drop out of the punk scene? What types of music have you been listening to recently?

ANDY Well it depends what you mean by the punk scene, we were listening to Big Audio Dynamite, and trying to follow the progress of all the bands that had split up, but there was not too much around at the time that appealed to us. At the moment, I am listening to Joe Strummers "Global a go go". I thought it sucked in the beginning, but its growing on me. I think that's the case with a lot of records. They grow on you, it was the same with the later Clash stuff. I was disappointed with some of the stuff, but in time, I have grown to love it.

FOE The magic of the new songs sounds like the next logical step that should have happened in 1985, rather than breaking up the band. How did you go about writing the new songs? Were they old songs that never got recorded or are they brand new ideas?

ANDY The new songs, they were done in exactly the same fashion as we have always done them. I come up with the ideas for the music, and Spike the lyrics. The songs are not old songs that never got recorded. We don't have any old songs that have not been put on vinyl.

FOE Life in the early 80s provided plenty of material for writing songs about desperation and the ills of society. What are your observations comparing then and now? What is different between the early 1980s and the early 2000s? (Note: for some perspective, this interview was conducted before 9/11/01)

ANDY I think it is worse than the 80's. There is a lot more to be concerned about now. In the 80's it was unemployment and police brutality that was a big issue. Now we have the holes in the ozone layer, the multi national companies taking over the world, global economy, mad cow disease, aids, well the list goes on and on.

FOE Does a song like "I don't give a Fuck" still have relevance to you now that you would be old enough to have a 17 year old of your own?

ANDY "I Don't Give a Fuck", well it was a very cliched punk song, very teenage as we were back then. I think, with age you do give a fuck. You do care more and certain things in your life become important and worth fighting for.

FOE What was the inspiration for the song "I Never Needed You"?

ANDY "I Never Needed You", is about someone who is going to die, and suddenly finds that everyone cares all of a sudden.

FOE "Only 21" has a line, "It's strange to be nostalgic when you're only 21". How do you feel now? How do you interpret the nostalgia for your own band and punk in general? How old are all the band members?

ANDY Still feel the same, but now I am 37 and it don't feel so strange to be nostalgic, in fact we are more nostalgic than ever. We want to listen to all the records we grew up on, The Clash, Pistols,

Buzzcocks, Gen X, Subway Sect, etc. As far as the band is concerned well it's hard to be nostalgic over songs you have done yourself. Compared to some bands I think they suck, but that's me. I always compare us to like the best bands ever, and I get disappointed.

FOE Was there ever any confusion between you and another band that was also named the Partisans (but spelled with a "Z")?

ANDY Yea, I actually bought them, just to see what they were like, and now to make it worse there is a French band called les Partisans and a Spanish band called los Partisanos.

FOE What has everyone in the band been doing for the last almost two decades? Jobs, marriage, kids, travel, jail time, sobriety? What were the significant events of your lives in the last two decades?

ANDY All the above and more.

FOE The day I am writing this is the day before the four-year anniversary of Princess Diana's death. Did her death have any meaning to you?

ANDY I don't give a fuck, whoops that was punk. No but seriously, its a shame that someone died in such a tragic manner. It does not matter if it was Diana, or John Doe. The song "Hysteria" is about such events. How the whole of the media goes hysterical over such things, and suddenly pretend that they are moved and shocked.

FOE What records would you recommend to a kid that is new to punk (besides Partisans records)?

ANDY The Clash first album, Sex Pistols "Never Mind the Bollocks", "Inflammable Material" by Stiff Little Fingers, Generation X, Johnny Thunders, etc.

FOE How did you hook up with TKO and arrange for the new record?

ANDY They contacted us, we wanted a label that was open for more than just the cliched 1234 punk. They have an open mind. Not only that Mark, the owner was a big fan of our second album, and "Blind Ambition". There was no pressure on us to put out stuff just to appeal to the new generation of street punk. TKO like melodic stuff, so it suited us fine.

FOE What does the future hold for the Partisans? Plans for a US tour?

ANDY Would love to come to the states, as for the future, we are not really that serious about it all. It's just fun. If anything comes of it, then great, it would be great to make a living from the music instead of working 9-5. But we will never sell enough records to make an income from it, so it will always just be a hobby, but its a fun hobby.

PARTISANS DISCOGRAPHY

Police Story/Killing Machine 7" No Future released 1981. Spent over twenty-two weeks at the number five position of the indie charts. The Line up at the time: Spike on the mike, Louise on Bass, Shark on drums and (Andy) Lealand on Guitar.

"17 years of Hell" 7" No Future, 1983. Spent eighteen weeks at the number two position of the indie charts. The line up was the same as Police Story

"Blind Ambition" 7" Cloak and Dagger
This was the first release with a new line up, a new sound and a new record label. Blind Ambition was a slight departure from the older stuff, much to the disappointment of our older fans. It spent eight weeks at the number five spot in the indie chart. The Line up: Spike on the Mike and Guitar, Shark on Drums, Lealand on Guitar and Dave Parsons on Bass who later found fame and fortune with Transvision Vamp and then Bush.

"Police Story" lp 1982 and then re-released on CD which contains all the tracks from the previous singles on it.

"Time Was Right" lp
The Time was Right was the last record the band released, unfortunately they didn't have enough songs to fill an album, so they cheated a little, one side was recorded live in Brixton with Conflict, and included their older stuff, whilst the other side contained brand new Clash sounding classics, it had 3 weeks at the number twenty spot. The clashy side included yet another line up change, this time it was Rob on Guitar (a brilliant guitarist may I add), Shark on Drums and Lealand Bass. This album has recently been re-released with lots of bonus tracks and lost mixes.

"Best Of The Best of The Partisans" CD Captain Oi Records
It includes all possible lineups, although some of the sleeve notes are incorrect. It was Spike (Rob) that took up film making. Shark moved to Asia. Lealand moved to Scandinavia. The last 2 bonus tracks were recorded by Spike and Lealand, and have nothing to do with The Partisans.

"Hysteria" EP TKO 2001
TKO Records released 2 formats, vinyl and CD. The Partisans released it on their own label. The line up includes 2 of the original Partisans, Spike and Lealand and 2 new members, Gustaf on Drums and Magnus on the bass.

THE PARTISANS

POLICE STORY
w/ **KILLING MACHINE**

