

MAGAZINE SECONDS

INTRODUCTION #2

SECONDS Magazine stands as Pop Culture's coolest and smartest organ. For a decade and a half we presented interviews with intense and/or fabulous personalities of music, art, literature, film, crime, and science. We adopted the tag "The Art Of The Interview" in celebration of our unique style. From 1986 through 2000, few hipsters would deny that SECONDS ranked among their favorite mags.

I am proud to have served as editor from 1992 until the bitter end. In 1987 I became a regular contributor. Such entertaining entities as The Workdogs, Black Snakes, Cop Shoot Cop, GG Allin and The Serial Killers were among my early subjects. My territory grew to include brand-name national acts, graphic artists and writers; ultimately I probed some of our era's greatest minds.

The magazine's lifespan paralleled very exciting times. From the streets came Rap; from captured electrons came Techno. Kaleidoscopic interbreeding of Rock styles yielded new varieties of Metal, Punk, Psychedelic and Glam. Grunge Rock engendered Indie and Alternative forms. Hip-Hop, Ambient, Acid Jazz, Trip Hop, Drum-N-Bass — all evolved energetically.

Among that era's heroes were the engineers who ushered us into a Digital Age. CD technology opened up amazing archival opportunities that led to the re-issuing of yesteryear's musical gems; the cornucopia of musical history could be had for home listening. Nostalgia itself became a recognized musical genre.

In the beginning SECONDS went to press as hastily-typeset "mechanicals" on stacks of shaggy, re-used boards. In the end a Mac G4 processed everything, spitting it out on two CDs. Very exciting times.

I met Steven Blush on the Staten Island Ferry, not commuting to that distant borough but aboard attending a party thrown by Capitol Records for 1986's New Music Seminar. Capitol rented the ferry boat for the night; during the cruise Skinny Puppy debuted to the Rock cognoscenti. Steven handed out copies of SECONDS with true Eighties indie publishing spirit. In those days I did EXIT Magazine, so we sorta knew of each other through the grapevine. And, he knew Nancy Jean Keating, who later served as both the SECONDS art director and my wife for too brief a time.

In the SECONDS universe, vice sat alongside virtue; good and evil coexisted. We helped major labels break bands while milking them for advertising revenue. We told people we liked their stuff even if we'd never heard it. We ran free ads for PETA and other animal rights organizations alongside interviews with serial killers. We burned printers. We were flown around the country, put up in luxury hotels, fed dinners at overpriced restaurants on unlimited expense accounts. We hung out into the wee hours with coked-out publicists; we had breakfast with beautiful radio astronomers. Music's biggest stars took time out of their busy schedules to schmooze us. But most of all we got lavished with respect and accolades because our interviews were the best. We set the standard for Rock Journalism. We got interviews with elusive and reclusive characters. We got our subjects to tell the truth.

The magazine's strength stemmed from our contributors' skills. When I assumed editorship, publisher Steven Blush was the principal interviewer. Art critic Carlo McCormick often contributed interviews of the high and mighty. The first regularly-appearing interviewer I enticed on board was Althea Morin who, with the exceptions of this collection's editors and Mr. McCormick, served the magazine longer than anyone. She covered the Goth scene. Adam Keane Stern joined next, serving as the managing editor. He interviewed all sorts of interesting characters. Then came the author of *Lords Of Chaos*, Michael Moynihan, who reeled in some of our most compelling features. He reported from the point where Rock meets crime. The illustrator Steven Cerio interviewed prominent artists. Boyd Rice lent his wit to our pursuit of stars and diabolical entities. Tom Terrell wielded a feel for the funky, providing us with excellent coverage of cool shit. David Paul brought Classical and post-Modern music to life. Tamara Conniff reported on hot and breaking acts; she came into the fold after our interview with her musician father Ray. Spider did some of Hard Rock's hardest characters. Michael Uman harnessed the new waves of nascent Electronica. No political potato was too hot to be handled by Robert N. Taylor. Nor was any taboo too sacred to be broken by that archivist of the insane, John Aes-Nihil. David West contributed hell-bent interviews,

ferreting out his subjects' worst fears. Porn mogul David Aaron Clark's probing prickliness sparked controversy. Thomas Colbath, who served as art director, explored the psyches of art's biggest fish. Irwin Chusid investigated weirdness. Thomas Stanley covered Jazz and Urban. Phillip Carlo contributed his exclusive interview with Richard Ramirez.

Many other excellent interviewers contributed to the magazine. Our failure to include them herein is not the result of any hierarchical selection. The interviews in this collection, for the most part, record verbal manifestations of insanity, criminality, egotism, and sheer will, or else they record moments of overwhelming beauty from truly beautiful people. We worked with many interviewers who cranked out great stuff for us, but their subjects were nice, well-adjusted folk who didn't fit the mindset of this collection.

Excellent interviewers with whom we worked but who are not represented herein include Eric Wielander, Chad Hensley, Jason Szostek, Brittany, Ken Scrudato, Tim Caldwell, Steve Martin, Michael Andros, Sal Canzonieri, Sarah Kate Wade, Maria Ma, and Terrence Fleming.

The personnel: Publisher Steven Blush conducted the lion's share of interviews. This writer served as editor, occasional art director, and interviewer. Over time our efforts were augmented by the services of the following individuals: Associate editor Jerry Lee Williams whipped the writing process into shape. Eric Wielander served as senior editor. Kyra Burton assisted with writing tasks while living with me. RIP. Craig Molino transcribed & advised.

Bobby Persanti was the first art director, followed by Nancy Jean Keating. Then, Thomas Colbath art-directed for awhile, followed by the painter Kim Seltzer. In a final blaze of graphic glory, computer guru Eric Hammer did the last four issues.

Photographers with whom the magazine enjoyed ongoing relationships include Michael Lavine, who shot most of the covers, Richard Kern, who shot some covers as well as our sexiest subjects, Wendy Idele, whose glamorous giddiness graced many of the later covers, Claudia Bellino, Seth McBride, and Robin Perine.

- The paragraphs preceding each interview are brief excerpts from the original essays that introduced SECONDS subjects. We referred to those essays as "intros." The interviewers wrote them. Intros conveyed complete biographies within witty frameworks. The unedited excerpts herein were selected for their brevity and punch.
- Over the course of the magazine's existence, editorial styles evolved. For example, in the beginning, decades were presented numerically — the 60s, the 70s, and so on. Later they were written out — the Sixties, the Seventies. Genre names came to be treated as proper nouns — jazz became Jazz with a capital J, rock became Rock. The first letters of drug names were capitalized — Heroin capital-H, Cocaine cap-C et cetera. Unique categories of Pop Culture eventually got the same treatment — we capitalized the first letters of Science Fiction, Blaxploitation, etc. We spelled out numbers — the words "three thousand" rather than the numerals 3000. We wrote out words like "dollars" rather than using a dollar sign — after all, when our subjects spoke, they said the words rather than the numerals or



symbols.

In this collection, all stylistic characteristics remain intact, so that each interview is formatted as it originally appeared. Thus the inconsistencies of style encountered herein.

- Our seventeen-year-in-the-making digital archive survives in various states of decay upon ancient floppy discs, old SyQuest drives, and aging Zip discs. Only the final two issues — 51 and 52 — made it onto CDs. Throughout the archive's accumulation many files were damaged or lost. While much of the art herein was preserved in its original 300 dpi glory, some of it is reproduced from low-resolution images or scans of the magazines' pages. It would've been impossible to obtain most of the original art, and we resisted the temptation to draw upon the materials of currently-active collectors, fan clubs, record companies, publishers, or of the subjects themselves.

Peace to my family, all my fans and friends, my demons, my cats, my supporters and enablers, my exes, those who protect me, and those I have yet to embrace.

— *George Petros, Brooklyn, October 2004*

Editorial notes for .45 DANGEROUS MINDS