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# The Spin Cycle

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March 14, 2002

## Fugazi to Play the Greek Theatre

By Luke Van Gombos

Remember in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* when all those Nazis looked at the Ark and their skin melted off their faces? On Friday, March 22, Fugazi, the most important band in independent music, will return to Richmond after 5 years, playing a free concert in the Greek Theatre. Will you have the willpower to avert your eyes?

Composed of two guitarists/vocalists, a bassist, and a drummer, Fugazi performs on stage with an unforgettable energy. Distorted guitars thrash back and forth with a ferocity that is fueled by aggressive vocals and complex drum patterns and held in control by melodic bass lines. Fugazi has an unmistakable ability to produce an aggressively melodic sound while maintaining an instrumental complexity that appeals to the intelligent listener.

Natives of Washington DC, the foursome has been together for 15 years and has possibly the largest following of any band not signed to a

major record label. But if they're so good, why aren't they on a major label? And why don't we see them on MTV? It's all part of their philosophy.

Despite their success, Fugazi has stood by their ideals, distributing their music and their message from the bottom up. They don't sell merchandise (except music), don't make music videos, and never charge more than \$5 for a concert.

"If somebody can make something and instantly make a million people want to buy it, that's pretty amazing" says singer/guitarist Ian MacKaye, "but that's got nothing to do with us."

MacKaye is familiar with Do-It-Yourself rock music. He founded Dischord Records, Fugazi's label, in 1980, distributing his own albums and those of other local bands, cultivating DC's punk scene in the 80s and 90s.

Before Fugazi, MacKaye made a name for

himself as the front man of Minor Threat, a punk band with an important message. You may have heard the term "straight edge." That was them. They made it a "punk thing" to not drink or do drugs or have promiscuous sex. The philosophy is still followed by many bands today, including Fugazi.

Despite the aggressive and emotional nature of their sound, Fugazi doesn't stand for moshing at their shows. They also don't use set lists, which means that at the end of a song they have to be able to segue into any of the nearly 100 songs they have written, using hand signals or subtle guitar movements as a transition.

**Fact:** This show will be the best UR has ever seen.

**Fact:** The Rah Bras are opening, a terrific band from Richmond.

**Fact:** Fugazi will destroy your brain, Friday March 22, in the Greek Theater.

## Giving the Devil His Due

By Alexander Stewart

Monday night just moved up on my list of Favorite Nights of the Week, to Third Place, behind Thursday (#1) and Friday (#2), and is now ahead of Tuesday (#4), Saturday (#5), and Sunday (#6). How could this be? Well, having no classes on Friday, Thursday is my new Friday, and Friday is my new Saturday. Tuesday is new episodes of *The Real World*. What's better than *The Real World*? Why, Satan, of course!

By 'Satan' I mean 'The Devil's Workshop,' or just 'The Devil,' if you're into the whole brevity thing. The Devil's Workshop is an absolutely insane jazz performance every Monday night in the Back Room of Bogart's on Lombardy Street in the Fan. It kicks off usually around 10:45, but check in a bit earlier if you want to get a good seat. The band has 17 members, and looks like a classic Count Basie-style Big Band, but the noise that this bunch makes is a far cry from the Big Band swing that gets grandparents grooving. Instead of the band supporting one featured soloist with orchestrated harmony lines, the soloist starts off from the established

melody of the song, and eventually finds himself in a place way, way, way far away, and all the while the rest of the band tries to catch up with whatever the soloist is developing.

Sure, you say, my favorite jamband does that all the time, what's the big deal?

The big deal, friend, is that in *The Devil's Workshop* there are 17 musicians all playing the

improv game, listening to each other and inventing parts which harmonize, and occasionally trying to jump in and steal the ball. The band plays off of an assortment of musical styles which showcase their influences, from Duke Ellington to Charles Mingus to Radiohead to *The Girl From Ipanema*. And they are not afraid to dabble in the Black Arts with which modern jazz artists wrestle, hip hop and funk, as they are known to sometimes feature a DJ with turntables and a freestyle rapper at their performances. And if you have been paying attention to music on the UR campus lately, you will recognize a few of the musicians: Colin Kililea, a sax player, played with *Infectious Organisms* when they rocked the campus last spring, and Robbie Sinclair, the drummer, backed up our own Laura Ann Boyd when she performed her Motown act in the Pier this semester.

Something happens in the Back Room on Mondays, and if you go check out *The Devil* one week, I think Monday might move up on your list of Favorite Nights of the Week.

## Top 10 Spins of the Week

(as reported to *College Music Journal*)

1. Piebald - We Are The Only Friends We Have
2. Jimmy Eat World - Live At La Scala
3. Clinic - Walking With Thee
4. Engine Down - Demure
5. Eels - Souljacker
6. Bats and Mice - Believe It Mammals
7. Damien Jurado - I Break Chairs
8. Joey Ramone - Don't Worry About Me
9. South - From Here On In
10. Bad Religion - The Process of Belief