





hospice nurses

For everyone you know, someday, will die ...

on tour in THE Year 2025



The 2025 european campaign was the band's official end of the of the
Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots anniversary tour.

Well the band didn't get stuck in a round-a-bout, or
maybe they did, either way the European Vacation of

joining up with *Modest Mouse* to begin the 20-date “American Tour 2025, The Good Times are Killing Me.” The June 21 show at the Azkena Rock Festival in Vitoria-Gasteiz Spain was the band’s final show of the Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots anniversary tour which began in 2023 in England.

In total, the band performed 81 shows throughout 16 countries traversing the globe to countless amounts of adoring fans while cementing loving, lifelong memories.

Now that its’ officially summertime, fans in America are making their plans to catch the upcoming tour with renewed anticipation.

What’s next in the ongoing *The Flaming Lips* evolution?

Time will tell...

NOTE: Anyone with pictures from performances that would like to send one in to this newsletter, please send them to editorobserver1@gmail.com or tag The Observer on Instagram. We would love to include them in a future issue!

The Azkena Rock Festival in Spain on June 21. (@azkenarockfest)

The Flaming Lips Azkena Rock Festival, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain

Fight Test

One More Robot/Sympathy 3000-21

Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots, Pt. 1 & 2

In the Morning of the Magicians

Ego Tripping at the Gates of Hell

Are You a Hypnotist??

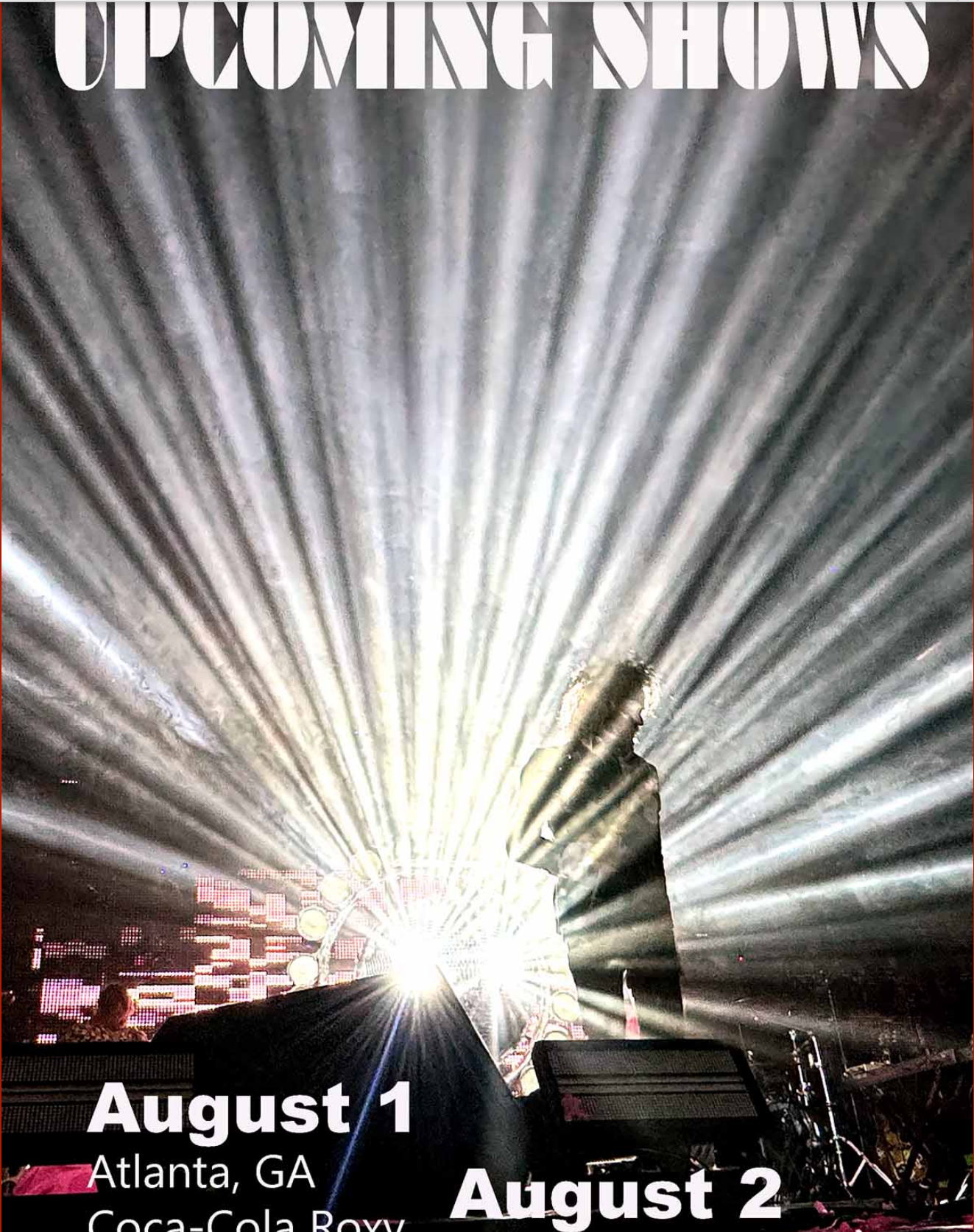
It's Summertime

Do You Realize??

Pompeii Am Gotterdammerung
The Yeah Yeah Yeah Song (With All Your Power)
Race for the Prize

###

UPCOMING SHOWS

A person stands on a stage, silhouetted against a massive, radiant burst of light that fills the upper half of the frame. The light rays fan out in all directions, creating a dramatic, starburst effect. In the background, a large, illuminated structure resembling a Ferris wheel or a complex stage set is visible, adding to the concert atmosphere. The overall scene is dark, with the primary light source being the central burst.

August 1

Atlanta, GA
Coca-Cola Roxy

August 3

Richmond, VA
Brown's Island

August 2

Raleigh, NC
Red Hat Amphitheater

August 5

Philadelphia, PA

[TICKETS](#)

From THE archives:

JULY



July 1986

Hear It Is

July 26, 2011

The Flaming Lips with Lightning Bolt

EP

July 16, 2002

Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots

Studio Album

July 19, 2019

King's Mouth: Music and Songs

Studio Album

July 10, 2020

Dinosaurs on the Mountain

Single

July 24, 2020

You n Me Sellin' Weed

23 Years Ago:

Live at the Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham, England (July 4, 2002)



[VIDEO @ thesatellitehead](#)

Setlist:

Wayne speaks
The Captain intro tape
Do You Realize??
Race For The Prize
The Spark That Bled
Yoshimi Battles The Pink Robots Pt. 1
Lightning Strikes The Postman
Feeling Yourself Disintegrate
Sleeping On The Roof
Fight Test
Can't Get You Out Of My Head (Kylie Minogue cover)
She Don't Use Jelly
In The Morning Of The Magicians

[How Will We Know?](#)[What Is The Light?](#)[The Observer](#)

29 Years Ago:

The Flaming Lips - Live at the Nautica Stage in Cleveland, OH (July 30, 1995)



[VIDEO @ thesatellitehead](#)

Setlist:

Mountain Side

She Don't Use Jelly

Moth In The Incubator

Oh My Pregnant Head

Bad Days

Put The Waterbug In The Policeman's Ear

Turn It On

Superhumans

Unconsciously Screamin'

What A Wonderful World (Louis Armstrong cover)

Psychiatric Explorations Of The Fetus With Needles (live debut)

The Observer

Do You Have A Story To Share?

Reach out at:

editorobserver1@gmail.com

The Observer

7 THINGS EVERY KID NEEDS TO HEAR

1. I love you
2. I'm proud of you
3.  THE FLAMING LIPS

The Observer

Yoshimi Recognized as One Of The 50th Best 10th Albums Of All Time

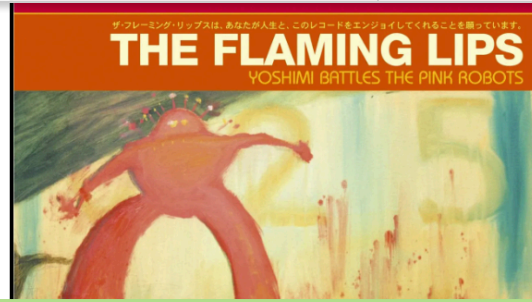
Last week Rolling Stone published the list “The 50 Best 10th Albums” and *The Flaming Lips* made the magazine’s list at number 12.

The magazine said the “list spotlights the true legends who made it to their 10th album and were still near the top of their game.”

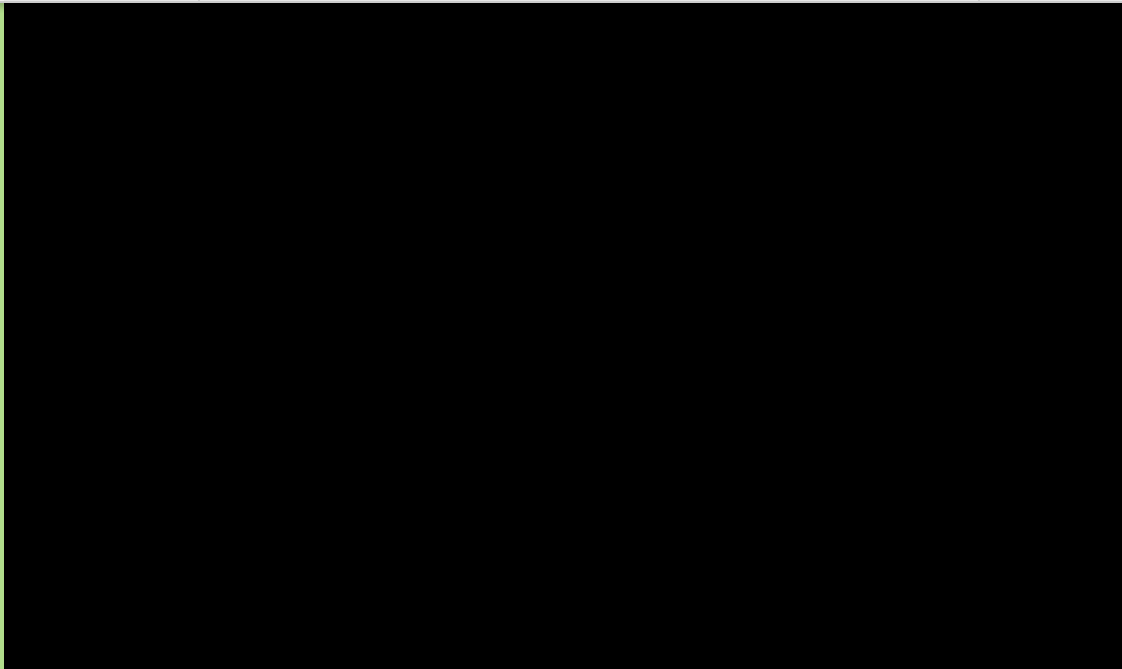
Read the [entire list here](#).

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Flaming Lips, 'Yoshimi Battles the



The Golden Collaboration; And The Spillover of Joy



The Golden Path has brought smiles to thousands of fans across Europe this year.

One of the most impressive resurrections this year has been the return of *“The Golden Path”* into the performance rotation. Anyone with a love of rhythm, and a fondness of the song’s gradual growth to its climatic peak and finish can appreciate the high energy the music has brought to the band’s live shows.

The constant, yet clean rhythm playing by Matt on drums and Tommy on bass sets the foundation for the song which allows for a beautiful build up. With AJ fingering the sharp, fast, definitive loop on the Fender and Derek on keys, gives Wayne the space to build the vocals from a gradual, conversational tone to something more powerful while delivering the story of traveling on the golden path.

Then, like something out of a Seussian tale, the song crescendos with Wayne — surrounded by the sun and a pair of dancing bug-eyed aliens — and others singing the harmonious “please forgive me, I never meant to hurt you”

band, and the crowd into one joyous fusion.

Is it the best five-minute jubilee in any given *Lips* show this year? Depends on who you ask.

Released in the fall of 2003, some critics at the time described *The Golden Path* as a “mismatched collaboration” between Tom Rowlands and Ed Simons of *The Chemical Brothers*, and the *Lips*, adding the song would eventually fade over time because it lacked “stamina,” for long term relevance — whatever that means.

The song still remains a strong part of *The Chemical Brothers* catalog, and was added to their essentials list on *Apple Music*.

An Instagram post by the *Lips* ahead of the UK tour opener in Birmingham in late April gave us a clue that the band could be bringing the song back. Just hours after that post, the band ripped into the song in the second set at the O2 Academy in Birmingham.

This band has shown over the course of its lifetime that collaboration is not only key to unlocking upward growth, but it has given other artists and fans a taste of the *Lips*’ creative process.

If experimentation is one of the lasting legacies of the *Lips*, then its’ been collaboration that has been one of the best vessels the band has used to further expand its artistic boundaries.

And the results? The music? Speaks for itself.

But who really cares what critics say anyway.

Now that the song is 22-years-old, and fans scream and dance during each of its performances, it could be said that it is the love of this song that gives *The Golden Path* the ultimate stamina.



LETTERS

An open letter to The Flaming Lips band

I once again find myself in a space of counting down the days until I get the privilege of an evening with you. 64 days or 1,536 hours or 92,160 minutes or 5,529,600 seconds to be exact—depending on the unit you prefer to use. Despite having just devoured a 4 show run overseas in April, I am just as pumped as I was the first time I counted down the days to a FLips show 14 years ago. As my personal show count climbs (not fast enough, I might add), this band remains at the top of the list of the greatest shows I have ever experienced.

I struggle to find the right words to express what this band, what each of you, mean to me personally, but I am going to try anyway.

By day, I am a hospice nurse and have been for a little over a decade. I have spent my career helping humans find physical comfort, emotional strength and spiritual peace at the end of their life. I have cared for some of the most amazing human beings on the planet and I have cared for some of the worst too. All of them have taught me that what is important is not what is often celebrated on this planet. As a society, we highlight money and celebrity and status in each other openly. It's not often that we celebrate each other exactly who and where we are here and now. There have been moments in my career that I am relating not to a patient with a name and a specific diagnosis but to a human with a specific frequency of light and something to say to me that can't be communicated in words. It is so vulnerable, so primal, so raw. These are the moments that make me understand that I was given a gift to serve humans in this very sacred space. It's hard to explain these interactions but I can feel in the way you bring your gifts to the world that you understand this type of connection too.

I am sharing with you because I want you to know that I would not be here writing these words if it weren't for you and the gifts this band has given me. To say that every show is a gift, is an understatement. The last several years have brought me some of the darkest times I have ever experienced in this life. Despite having a fulfilling career, a wonderful partner, amazing children- the darkness seemingly wouldn't let up. The pain in this time felt like it was just too much to bear. There were many, many days that the countdown to the next FLips show was the thing that kept me going, kept me putting one foot in front of the other. Knowing in my mind that there were tickets purchased and a mutual understanding with my ride-or-die-FLips-show-partner that we will be arriving at whatever time necessary to place ourselves on the rail in a position to receive the best antidepressant there ever was, literally kept me on this planet for one more day. If I could just hold on for one more day, I would be one day closer to that magical collective experience

take the stage. From the vulnerable, primal, raw, space inside my own human being-ness, I hope you feel the deep, sacred gratitude I hold for you. There is so much joy I have and have experienced because I stayed one more day and one more day after that and one more day after that-all because of you...

The joy has been amplified now that the darkness has lifted. Let me share just a little bit of it with you.... Joy for the incredible dedication from a band that has been consistently producing some of the most iconic music on the planet for the last 42 years. Joy to be comfortable celebrating who I am, at my core, just as I am. Joy to drop the mask once and for all. Joy to be sharing this kind of connection with so many other humans out there on the interwebs. Joy to be able to put a real hug to a name in those interweb friends at so many beautiful shows, across the planet. Now every one of those beautiful friends is part of my FLam for sure. Joy for every morning after with sore muscles from dancing and a glow that can't be replicated with any drug. The joy of my proverbial cup overflowing, spilling into all the others I meet walking through this life. The joy of being able to say that I made it to the other side of the darkness.

I think Ram Dass got it right when he said, "We are all just walking each other home." Thank you for helping me to walk a little longer before heading home. I haven't been to nearly enough Flaming Lips shows yet. Lucky for me, tickets are purchased for 5 more incredible shows at the end of this current countdown. My ride or die is ready to roll. My Keep Screaming shirt is ready to don. My excitement is palpable. My heart is ready to take in all the love.

And finally, to Wayne: I will gratefully KEEP SCREAMING! It means I am alive.

Love from a grateful human,

Jeana

INSPIRED



A fan on the [*Lips* Reddit](#) board posted a video in mid June talking about reconnecting with an old friend of 20 years to write and produce a song about their love of *The Flaming Lips*.

He wrote:

"I have no idea how to get Wayne to hear it but I'd love to share it with you all."

Well, we thought it was a pretty dang cool song, and so since its inspired by the band, it was worth including.

###

ALL WE HAVE IS DANCE!!!



On June 28, the Perpetual Motion Dance Company, (PMDC) of Oklahoma City presented a pair of shows inspired by the music of *The Flaming Lips* at the Tower Theatre entitled: *All We Have is Now*.

The program featured a blending of post-modern and aerial dance performances inspired by the music of the *Lips*, with abstract choreographic storytelling which captured the essence of youthfulness and the wonderment of uncovering new possibilities, according to the dance company.

for self-discovery," PMDC.

Both shows featured the professional company's signature blend of stunning visuals and technical ingenuity and also highlight the youth company of Prairie Dance Theatre's Impact Dance Program, Perpetual Motion Dance's pre-professional company, PM2 and selected performers from the Oklahoma Contemporary Dance Festival.

###

THE INTERVIEW

I found my tribe



**Christopher Matteson
talks about seeing the band for the
first time, finding his tribe, his
fascination for fuzz, and the day
live music changed his life forever ...**

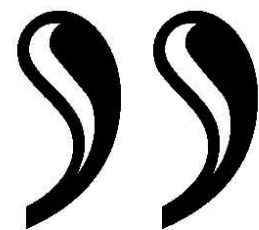


The Observer

More recently what means most to me about the live experience is the feeling of family and community. I can't begin to say how much I've grown to love the other fans.

They're all these brilliant exploding constellations of color and psychedelia...

— Christopher Matteson



**Q: When did you first discover
The Flaming Lips?**

I discovered the Flaming Lips when I saw them live for the first time 1993. I was 19 years old and had just come back from my freshman year of college in Idaho. I was born and raised in Detroit, and had been home for a month or two when I went with my friend and his girlfriend to see Porno For Pyros at the Phoenix Plaza Amphitheater in Pontiac, Michigan. It was this outdoor music venue on the top of a parking garage. I remember it was a beautiful sunny Sunday evening. I know it was a Sunday because there was a street preacher outside the venue literally standing on like an apple box he had brought, Bible in hand, yelling at us that we were all sinners and were going to hell. I found it a little presumptuous on his part as I had grown up a devout Mormon, and had just returned from a religious school which is now known as BYU-Idaho. I was a very straight laced kid. Never did a drug in my life, never drank. I was very much an anxious kid, and a rule follower, but I had gone to the first Lollapalooza two years prior in 1991 ... and it just blew my head wide open.

While I may have been a rule follower, I felt I was always questioning conventions and looked for ways to show my rebellion against what I felt was hypocrisy and whatnot in the culture at large. Seeing the Butthole Surfers and Nine Inch Nails and Jane's Addiction all in the same day just changed my life forever, and from that point on, I knew I was a live music devotee. Gibby Haynes brought a shotgun out and fired it over the crowd, would drink out of these whiskey bottles and throw them 30 feet in the air only to let them come crashing down on his head...it was so much fun. Later that day, I looked over and saw him walking barefoot up and down the pavilion and I was in awe. I remember as Jane's Addiction were in their encore, my brother and friend wanted to leave to beat the traffic out of the parking lot, but I

computer projection of a fractal lollipop kinda spiraling slowly while Summertime Rolls played. It felt so magical.

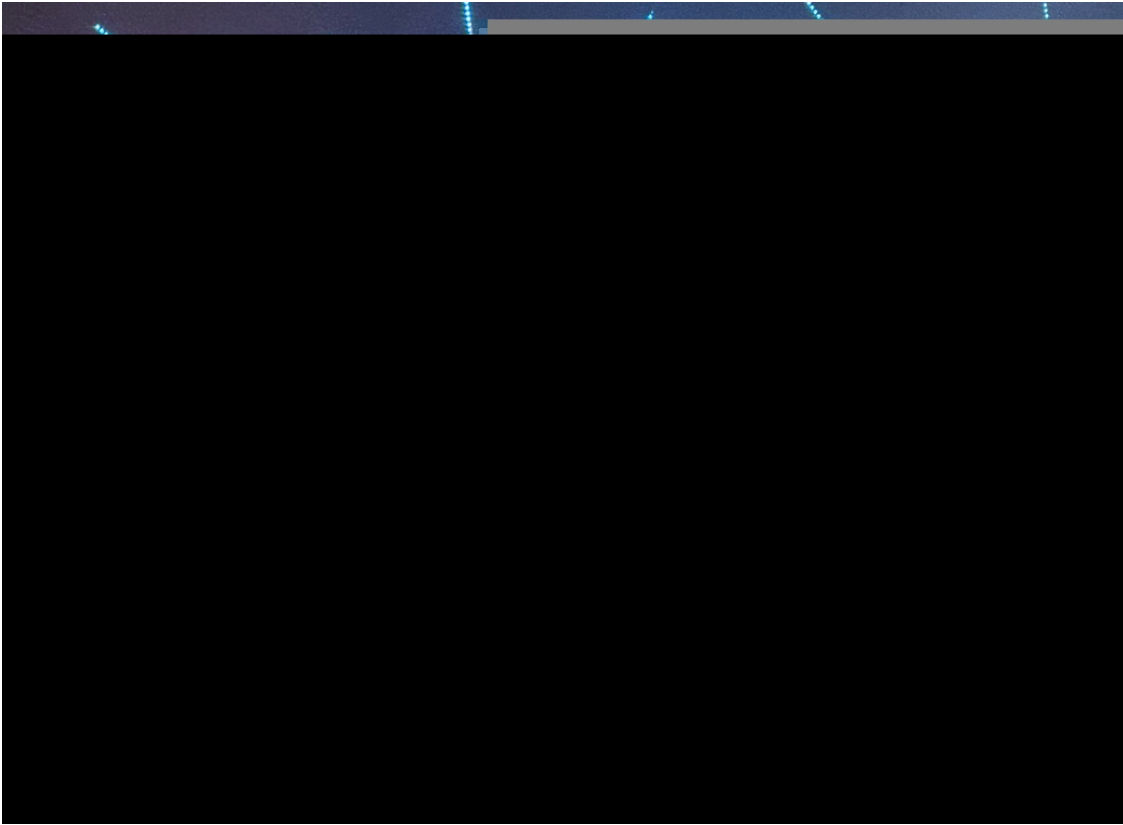
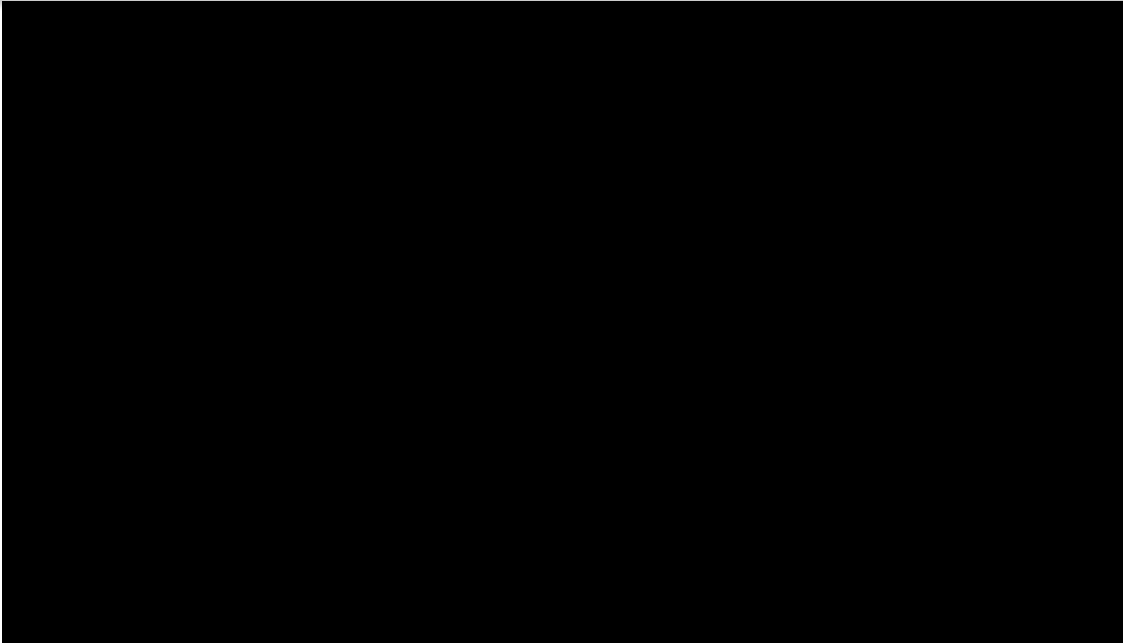
I had tried for years to find my way to express who I felt I was, and that day, seeing so many unique freaks made me feel I had found my tribe.

So when the Flaming Lips took the stage opening for Porno for Pyros in 93, I was again blown away by the fuzz. They were promoting Transmissions, and I'm a sucker for the fuzz tones. And they had these perfect pop melodies. I remember She Don't Use Jelly stood out to me for sure, but Turn it On, and Slow Nerve action also hit me hard. They blew Perry away that day. Seeing Porno for Pyros after having seen Jane's was such a let down, they only played for 45 minutes with no encore.

But I swear the Lips played longer than they did ... and louder ... and better...

Pictures submitted by Christopher Matteson







Rachel and Christopher call Utah home.

**Q: When was the first time you saw them?
Location and venue etc... and what was
your first impressions?**

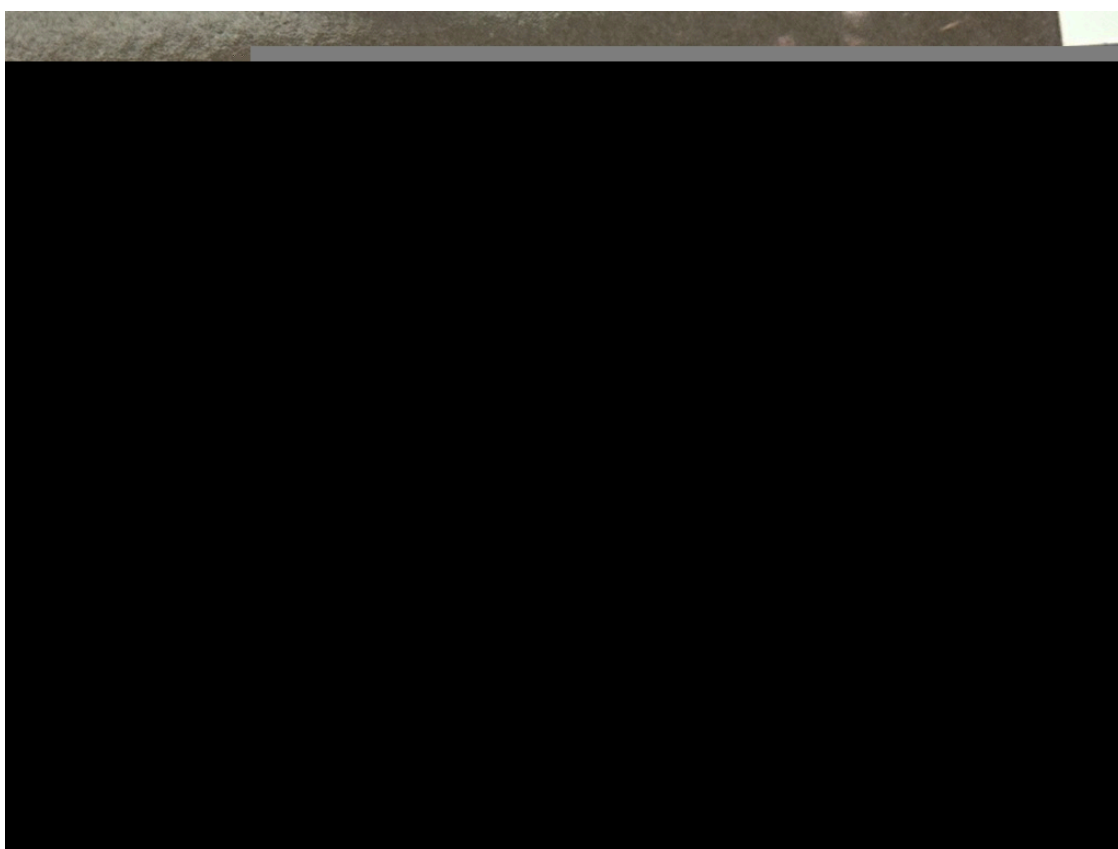
CM:

I guess this was kinda answered in the first question, but what I can say is the very next day, I made my way to my favorite record store in Royal Oak, Michigan, Play it Again Records, run by my friend, Alan Kovan. I walked in and said, "What do you know about the Flaming Lips." And he was the right guy to ask. Alan and his team of Michael, Brett, and Scoob were the pushers of all things Shoegaze and Space Rock. Alan walked me over to the F section, and Handed me Priest Driven Ambulance and Transmissions. I was back a week later to pick up Hit to Death. I guess Alan knew Scott Booker, so he used to get some of those early silk screen prints from Wayne as well as the postcards the Lips used to send out. I

Among us Now and Slow Nerve Action being in heavy rotation on my Discman back then.



Above and below, Lollapalooza, Detroit 1994.



Q: Meeting Ronald and Wayne in the early 90s, how did that shape your view of them as artists?

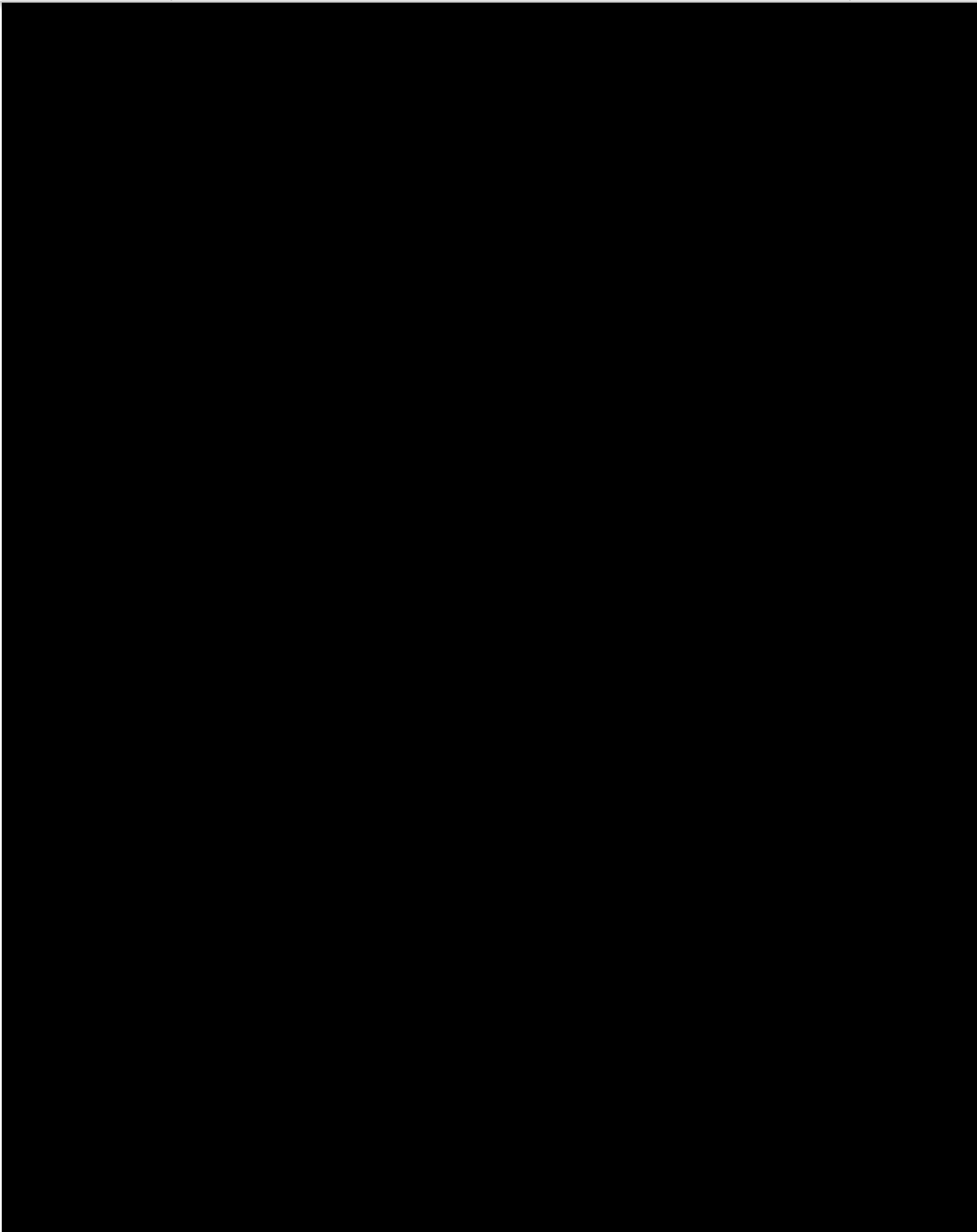
CM:

So in 1994, Lollapalooza came through Detroit, and if I remember correctly, they played three days in a row there, and I think they came through a fourth time a week later. I was a poor 20 year old just working landscaping and didn't have a lot of money, but I did go to the first two days in Detroit. Alan had got a booth for Play It Again Records right next to the second stage. I remember arriving early and while in line, I looked over and saw Wayne and Ronald tossing a baseball back and forth with mitts and everything. I went the first day with my best friend, Becky, who I'd known since I was four years old. Alan had so many of those second stage bands over at his booth signing things, but to me, meeting Wayne and Ronald was just a dream come true. I remember Ronald was shy, and didn't say much but smiled and nodded as he signed my Lollapalooza newspaper called "Teeth." When I came over to Wayne, I sat and talked with him for a second and then I went to shake his hand, and I had all these callouses from all the landscaping I had been doing that summer (best shape of my life), and he recoiled and was like "what the hell do you do for a living?" I mentioned I was a landscaper, and he commented, "Well, you definitely work a lot harder than me." To which I jokingly asked him to write a note to my boss to give me a break. "He grabbed one of the Play it Again flyers and wrote on the back, "Take it easy on Chris, he looks tired, Thanks, Wayne." I think I just realized how kind and friendly they were. Real human beings. It was

Richard Ashcroft of the Verve (also barefoot) while I think Luscious Jackson or Will Oldham and Palace Music were playing the second stage.

Later, when the Lips played, I was right against the rail. I remember there was a little person roadie with a pink mohawk. I don't know if he was with the Lips camp, or part of the venue, but I think I remember him working the bubble machine.

The next day, I came with my friend Nathan and I smuggled in a disposable camera to get some hidden shots of the band. They didn't do a signing that day, but I did get to meet Kim and Kelley Deal over by the second stage when they came over to do a song with Guided By Voices, Kim was just by herself not getting noticed and I talked to her for a minute or two, she signed my T-shirt and let me get a pic before pawning me off to Kelley. I took a few pictures of the Lips on stage, but one of the security guards tried to snag the camera away from me during Guided By Voices, so I was trying to keep it out of sight and didn't get the best shots. It was a lot different than nowadays where everyone's camera is out.



(Hit To Death promo flat signed by the band)

**Q: What is your favorite piece from your
Lips collection and why?**

CM:

2011, I had a heart attack at 37. It was minor and the doctor assured me that I hadn't done damage to my heart, but I did feel my mortality and I was quite depressed for a good year or so after that, feeling like I was a cautionary tale. I had finished up a very stressful Masters program to become a Marriage and Family Therapist, and it just took a toll on me, I guess. In 2012, I just decided, I want to have everything the Lips have released. So I kinda went on this quest... Discogs, eBay, etc. I went far and wide to start collecting the things I was missing. I wanted to be the guy who had it all. Sadly, though, through the old Lips board, I learned there were some real avid collectors out there who have amazing collections. Having four children I've had to balance out what I can get my hands on. There are still posters and items and whatnot from the "Made By Freaks With Love" category I'd love to have ... but I don't think it's in the cards I'll ever amass what people like Alan, and Kyle, and Joe have collection wise. I never got my hands on the talking Frog, or the Chocolate Skull with the first EP, or the Blood Fwends records or 24 hour Skull. I was just getting out of school with a full family, and no money and student loans I'll never pay off.

When I was living in Puerto Rico from 98-2000, my parents threw out all the old Spin, NME's, Melody Maker, Alternative Press, Raygun, and Rolling Stone magazines I had in my bedroom closet, including the Lollapalooza magazine Ronald had signed. It just crushed me to come home and find that gone. In 2013, I was able to find a signed promo flat of Hit to Death Signed by the entire band from that era.

That means a lot to me.

I'd say I also love that I've got almost an entire set of all the Christmas postcards they've sent out over the years. In 2002, the

"Hellfire Ltd. Street Team." And I responded to that, so Derek Brown became the guy who would send me promo materials to take around to local record stores. After that, I'd get signed CDs and 7" singles from the band, and I was on their Christmas Card mailing list. In a crazy "small world" incident, I was trying to round out the Christmas Card collection, I saw a person in England who was selling some early ones. I won the eBay auction for them, and when they arrived, they were postcards addressed to my friend, Alan at Play it Again Records. He used to go to England and trade things and whatnot for stuff that he'd then bring back to the states to sell in the store. Such a crazy small world.

(I'm still missing a few elusive cards to make my set complete. Including one that I should have got, but got only half of it in a plastic bag from the post office with a note telling me the other half had been damaged in transit when a mail truck had crashed or something like that.)

(Lips Postcard collection)

Q: What has been your best memory from seeing the band and why?

CM:

There are a few. I have to say, I don't have the numbers of shows under my belt like Dean, or Alan, or Amy for sure. I've only seen them 22 times over the past 32 years. Again, having a 4 kids, doesn't allow me to get out as much as I'd like to travel to see bands. I'm glad for the shows I got to see with Ronald in 93, 94 (2x), 95, and 96 all in Detroit ... those Christmas lights shows at St. Andrews Hall were beautiful. I stood on the balcony right over Michael for those, and I sat transfixed looking at Ronald's pedalboard and racks of equipment.

In 2002, Derek hooked my wife Rachel and I up at the Phoenix Plaza Amphitheater where I had seen them for the first time 9 years prior. Chris Chandler got us and took us back to Wayne. He walked us around and introduced us to De La Soul, Modest Mouse and Cake. He let us sit in the tent on the side of the stage while they performed. It was just Rachel and I and the band Cake just hanging there. I remember they had asked us if we wanted to

costumes for the White Stripes. I don't think I saw them, so I don't know if they were there then. But Wayne was so nice and kind and I remember helping fill up confetti balloons before the show and all.

That was a great night.

In 2011, about two months before my heart attack, they played the Great Saltaire in SLC. Derek brought my friend James and I backstage and we sat for a few hours with Wayne cleaning corrosion off of old batteries that were inside of forgotten laser pointers that they'd found in their warehouse. They planned to resurrect them to hand out to audience members to use that night. We spent almost 12 hours hanging out there from like 1 or 2 in the afternoon til 1 or 2 in the morning. A bunch of my friends had the chance to dress up in Wizard of Oz costumes and dance on stage. I tried to get my fat ass in one of the costumes at the time, but it didn't work, so I opted to just get front and center on the rail and filmed my friends up there. So that's twice now I had the chance to possibly go on stage, but I just wanted to be in front experiencing it. I think the hard thing for me is that I feel like I pride myself on being an intelligent, easy going person, and then sometimes I just don't know what to say being around someone I respect immensely and I just come off saying something stupid or not knowing what to say at all. But it was still probably my favorite concert experience. A local band called Spirit Master just kinda walked in and asked if they could open, and Wayne let them go on before Le Butcherettes, they filmed all of it and made a mini doc on Vimeo you can go see simply titled, "Spirit Master open for the Flaming Lips." You can see me and my friend James fastidiously cleaning laser pointers at the table. lol.

is the feeling of family and community. I can't begin to say how much I've grown to love the other fans. Brad, Alan and Kelli, Amy, Kampy, Kyle and Lara, Wes and Kray, James, Joe, Jude and Rachel, William and Jeana, Dean, Rachel, Keith and Colette, Tom and Morgan, Beth, Brian ... I know I'm forgetting some important people. They're all these brilliant exploding constellations of color and psychedelia...and then there's me. I think I may pride myself on being the most normal (read boring) fan when it comes to my concert going getup. Maybe that should be my schtick, there's Chris with his gray shirt amongst all the unicorns, and fairies, and elves and whatnot. But going to Oklahoma last Labor Day for those Zoo shows was so wonderful. I've learned how warm and loving this community has been. I've had a few rough years leaving the Mormon church, and that vacuum of community has more than been filled up by the people of this community.

Q: Do you have a favorite song, lyric or piece of music?

CM:

Wayne just gets the existential stuff better than any lyricist I can think of out there. The ephemeral nature of our existence is something that has always troubled me. I remember as a little kid trying to think about not existing and it just scared the ever loving crap out of me. And growing up Mormon, they speak of the eternal nature of the soul, and I remember as a 5 or 6 year old just being so distraught not just of death, but then trying to wrap my head around the idea of dying, and then existing forever and not being able to comprehend something that has no end. I still have to distract myself when my head starts going there. But I am a sucker for the way some songs just drill home the absolute beauty of enjoying the here and now. I love Ego Tripping at the Gates of Hell, All We Have is Now, It's Summertime...those three with Do You Realize?? off of Yoshimi have meant so much to me seeing them a number of times on this Yoshimi anniversary run over the past two or three years.

Brings tears of joy to my eyes. But man ... Gold in the Mountain of our Madness, it's like a near perfect song to me.

But I could go on and on. The Impluse off of Embryonic is perfection. Some of the stuff on Kings Mouth, especially those last two songs hit me. You can't ask me this question...because my brain reaches out in every direction. I want to give credit where it's due to each of the albums. There's something amazing on each of them. To me it all translates to pure joy.

Because when you take in all of it, the totality of all the ups

experience and how can you not see that as absolute beauty and joy? As a therapist, I'm trying to continually help people in the pit of despair find ways to embrace all of it and recognize the beauty of it all. You cannot understand happiness unless you've experienced sadness or hurt. I come home some days with the weight of all the sadness and conflict I see on a daily basis. And these songs, they absolutely bring me happiness and I share them with my clients all the time.

When I was living in Puerto Rico, I was a Mormon missionary.

People don't understand what an isolating experience that is. You're assigned to anywhere in the world for two years, you go out...and back when I did it, you only contacted your family by phone twice a year. The rest of the time, you're "dedicated to the work," and you only write your family one letter a week.

My friend Nancy, from LA sent me a copy of the Soft Bulletin. So it was kinda like contraband, because you're supposed to give up all worldly media and what not. That album was such a lifeline to me. I remember I was living in this small town called Añasco on the west coast of the island and it was early November when the Leonid meteor shower happens. I sat on the balcony of this dingy roach infested apartment above this house, sweating my butt off in the middle of the night, feeling so homesick and lonely, missing my family so much...just looking at the sky for meteors. I've got my headphones on, listening to "Feeling Yourself Disintegrate," when this huge fireball just lights up the sky directly above me. Sparks trailing off of it. One of the most beautiful meteor sightings I've ever seen. And I remember just thinking how that thing had traveled infinitely through space, and I saw the minute it collided with our atmosphere right above my head while listening to that song...I

really made me feel the wonder for the infinite in a much more empirical and scientific way than anything spiritual, but in that moment it became a somewhat transcendent, spiritual moment to me.

Q: Do you have a favorite album or period of the Lips' history? If so, what and why?

CM:

Whenever I listen to Transmissions or Providing Needles for Your Balloons, it transports me to being 19-20 years old. I've got a special spot in my heart for them and Clouds...they were my entry point. I think Embryonic is an album I can listen from start to finish and never wanna skip anything. It's probably the one I've been listening to a lot lately. It may be my favorite.

But I guess I can say that about a lot of their albums. They each mark kinda milestones of my life. They're kinda, to me, that band I found on my own I feel, and I have loved how I remember sitting backstage at the Saltaire Wayne mentioning something about how every few years the fanbase changes and their sound changes, and it makes me think about the different lives I've lived. I was a graphic design major originally, then I was a broadcasting major and I worked as a DJ in college radio and at a nightclub for a while when in school in Idaho. Then I

the mountains of this small Caribbean island. Then I was married and in school with a small family, and Now I've been a good 15 years into practicing as a mental health practitioner - originally working with people in rehab and now with couples and individuals. And my kids are almost all adults at this point. And I see how as I've gone through all these different stages, I've seen not only the Lips, but other bands I respect and love navigate personnel changes, or stylistic changes. And now being 51, I just see how fluid life is and how it's long and wonderful and I love that music has been an anchor that soothes all the bumps and bruises along the way.

Q: What are you looking forward to the most when you see the band next?

CM:

I see live music as a grounding, mindful exercise. I love being in the present. In a sea of humanity. Everyone being there in that moment all having a shared, transcendent, communal experience.

one. I look forward to seeing all my friends. I look forward to hugs from people. And gathering more confetti (Why? I don't know, I've got so much of that stuff.) When Rachel and I went to the show in 2002, we had recently found out we were pregnant with our first daughter. This last year, she designed stickers at my request merging some of the Yoshimi and Soft Bulletin design elements I was able to hand out to people at the Zoo shows.

Q: What has the music and the group meant to you?

CM:

I've probably been speaking in hyperbole with all of these questions, but really they've kinda meant everything to me. I have my life, friends, my family and my career and I've been really blessed with so much. It's been a hard few years for me with what life throws at you. Some of these songs, I don't think I will ever tire of. Additionally, I've been able to meet most all the band over the years, and they're all the sweetest people. I think the only Lips I haven't met are Jonathan and Mark. (Well, I guess AJ as well.) I've tried my best to round out my collection with all their individual projects as well others they've collaborated with. I love Stardeath and White Dwarfs, I love Colourmusic, I love Derek's band with his wife - Crocodile, Spaceface, New Fumes, The Brothers Griiin, Linear Downfall

number of other things from the guys they've released on Bandcamp or other places. Everyone of these guys are amazing musicians and songwriters in their own right.

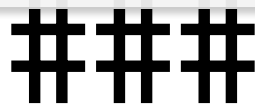
I just want to say how nice Derek has been to me over the years since I answered that request on the website back in 2002 for Hellfire Ltd. For years I'd get packages of CDs from him and Scott Booker. I think Derek referred to them as Booker's tastemaker recommendations. Its where I learned of Colormusic and Star Death...I think Nick or Matt told me they'd slip their own CDs in them when packaging those things, lol.

Chris and Nell Missoula MT 2023

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?

CM:

Hmmm...I've probably talked too much. I guess I can say I once made this little video montage of my kids a long time ago when they were little to "When you Smile." I used to watch that over and over, it would always bring tears to my eyes. I can't find it...grrr...old hard drives.



From ISSUE 1

Our very first interview, when this newsletter had just 22 subscribers, was with Santa, a.k.a Alan Bass celebrating the milestone that he had reached 100 shows with *The Flaming Lips*. Now that this audience has grown significantly, we wanted to republish this interview, and provide a few updates. *Until our website launches, will be republishing our interviews so fans who have missed them, can have an opportunity to read them in their entirety.*

Q: When did you first see The Flaming Lips?
(year, venue etc..)

A. BASS

First show: 11-13-02 Jones Hall Houston TX

“I had heard of the Lips but hadn’t listened to them until a friend played Yoshimi for me when it first came out. From the first squishy synth bass notes opening Fight Test, I was entranced with the psych pop beauty, played the album nonstop for months, also got Soft Bulletin pretty quickly.

The within a couple months of the Yoshimi release, they announced the Beck tour with the Lips opening and serving as his backing band. I always say I went to that show a Beck fan and came home a Lips fan. Became obsessed and worked my way back through their discography and listened to all of it nonstop for a few years.

Around the time Mystics came out, 2006-2007, I got to know a bunch of folks from the salmon-colored chat board on the old Warner Brothers Flaming Lips website, still good friends with a bunch of those people. Didn't see the Lips live again until the run of New Year's Eve shows in OKC from 2007-2011. I got divorced in early 2010, saw a bunch of shows that year, and since then I've seen multiple shows a year other than during Covid."

Q: What was it about their music that drew you in as a fan?

A. BASS

"What grabbed me about the music?

That's the toughest question. I love different periods of their music for different reasons. I don't even have a favorite album. I'd be hard pressed to name a top 5. Musically and lyrically, some of it is achingly beautiful, some of it rocks the fuck out, some of it is profound. I can't think of any other band or artist with the diversity of their catalog or who arguably made their best music in their second decade or even third decade."

Q: How long have you been wearing the Santa costume to shows, and what is the story behind that choice?

A. BASS

“I first wore a Santa suit to the Freak Night at the OKC Zoo (10-26-12) Halloween show. I had a bunch of friends who always dressed up and I wanted to fit in so I ordered a suit from SantaSuits.com. It was a nod to Christmas on Mars and also when the Lips had dancers on the sides of the stage. On the Beck tour they had people in animal costumes, and that evolved into Wizard of Oz characters one tour, Santas one tour.

I’m on my third suit. Also I’ve been wearing that Daniel Johnston shirt to Lips shows longer than I’ve been wearing Santa suits, almost every show since 2008.”

Q: Wayne has mentioned you from the stage, when did he first start to recognize that Santa was in the audience?

A. BASS

“I honestly can’t remember when Wayne first acknowledged me as Santa, but maybe 2013 or 2014. It became a regular thing pretty quickly, with him introducing me as the real Santa Claus at almost every show since then.”

Oklahoma City Zoo celebrating your 100th show?

A. BASS

“In some ways I’m really shy and having a few thousand people chanting “Santa, Santa” is fairly surreal. What I thought about that night was how much gratitude I have. The whole Lips family (band, crew, fans) have opened doors for me with many adventures that have changed my life in very meaningful ways. I’ve thanked every member of the band repeatedly for letting me be their Santa.”

Wayne shines a spotlight on Santa to acknowledge his presence during night one of the 2024 summer
Freak Out at the Oklahoma City Amphitheater.

Q: Seeing the Lips now over 100 times, is there any specific songs from the band's past eras that you specifically are looking for? If so, what songs and why?

A. BASS

“When I saw the Lips the first time they played a couple tacks off of Zaireeka, which I didn’t know at the time. I’ve never seen them do any of those songs since then, so those are

highest on my list. I always love when they play anything I haven't heard in a while, but I don't dwell much on worrying about the setlist."

Q: Do you still feel the same excitement seeing the band now that you did as a younger fan?

A. BASS

"It's the same level of excitement but it's different. Sometimes I get completely lost in the moment, just let the experience wash over me. Other times, say I'm seeing a run of shows with a similar setlist every night, I can focus on some specific aspect of what's going on without worrying I'm missing the bigger experience. Also, any time I'm going to a show now, it's as much about getting to see all the friends I haven't seen since last time."

Q: When you meet someone new and explain to them who The Flaming Lips are, what do you say to them?

A. BASS

heard stuff from multiple decades. As for the live show, I just tell people to go and experience it, that it's a sensory overload with a positive vibe."

Q: From your perspective, how has the music of the band grown over the decades?

A. BASS

"I like that they're always exploring, never trying to simply recreate what came before. I kind of think of each album as a stepping stone from the album before it to the album after it. For example, Clouds Taste Metallic sounds like a bridge between Transmissions and Soft Bulletin."

Q: So, any plans in 2025 to see the band? Where will the next Santa sighting be?

A. BASS

"I haven't solidified any plans. All of those West Coast shows are on my radar but I'll need to make some tough choices. I'm pretty sure I'll do the two Edgefield (Portland) shows with Modest Mouse. I love the Kettlehouse Amphitheater in Missoula and have a bunch of friends who will be at Ogden. And the Psychic Salamander Festival Modest Mouse is putting on near Seattle has a stellar lineup.

So, yeah, tough choices."

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WATCH:

The Flaming Lips on Sound Opinions (February 20, 1994)

Blastula: The Making of Embryonic

ISSUE 8 IN PRODUCTION

Release: August 1, 2025

Did you celebrate a milestone with the band?

What's your favorite album, song and why?

Have you had an incredible experience that
you want to share?

inspired by the music?

Issue 8 of The Observer is taking submissions.

Deadline to submit is Friday, July 25.

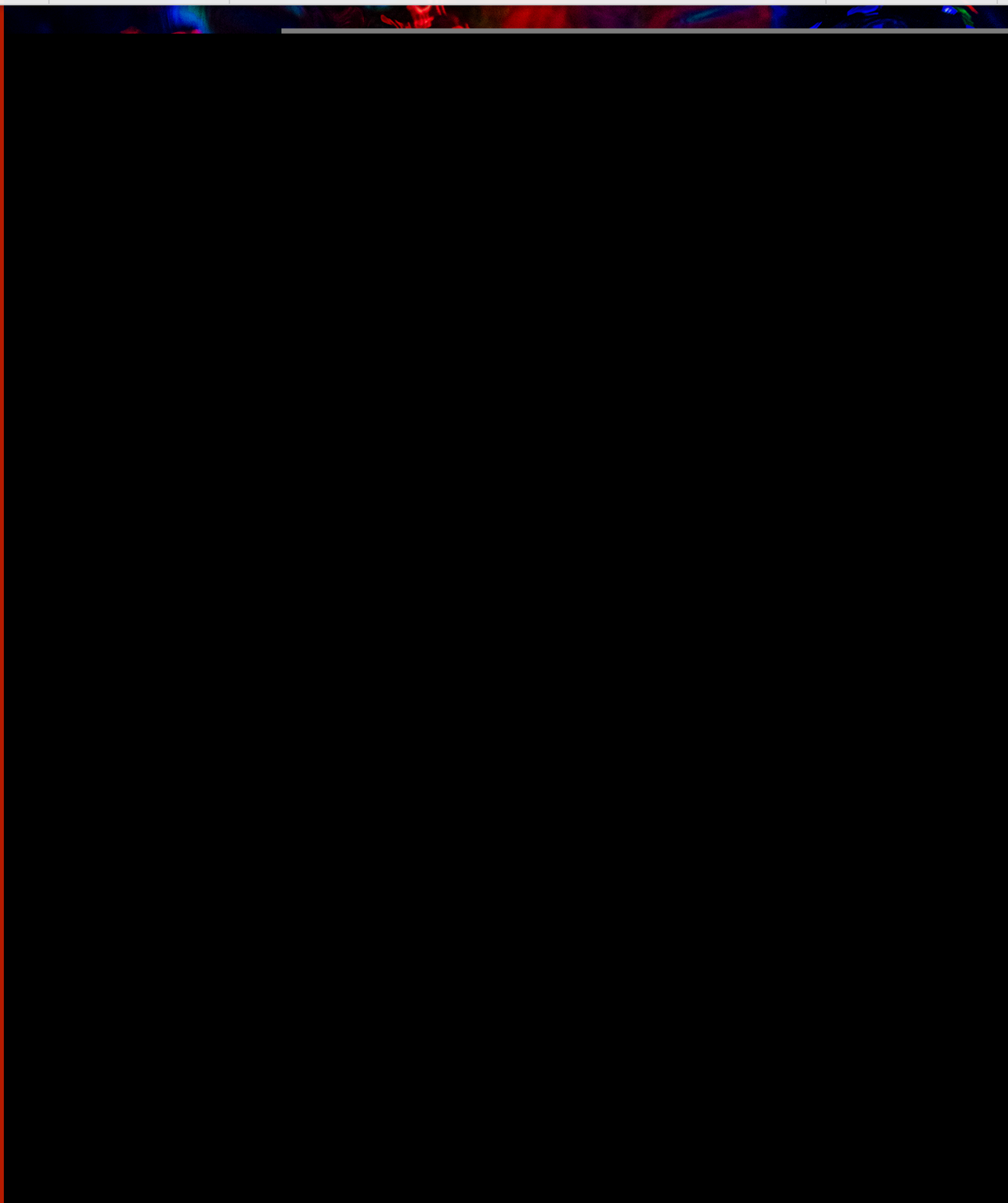
Send to: editorobserver1@gmail.com

ISSUE 7 BACKGROUND IMAGE:

This image appears behind each newsletter that is viewed via desktop or tablet.

Please submit artwork for this space by reaching out to:

editorobserver1@gmail.com



This is how LED lights and water react during our sound wave experiment playing
the title track of this newsletter, “The Observer.”

Editor’s Message:

Welcome to issue 7 of the The Observer, a newsletter dedicated to the fans of

Welcome all new subscribers!

Thunder Up!

Five members of the crew rocking Thunder gear at the O2 Academy in Brixton back in the spring.

Congratulations to the Oklahoma City Thunder on wining the NBA Championship. It was fun to see members of the band and crew celebrate the amazing season and playoff run, getting back from Europe just in time to celebrate with the community.

Let me start by saying, the words of a hospice nurse, describing the meaning of life, caring for the dying, and her love of the music hits deep. Thank you Jeana for the words and for submitting this newsletter's first letter.

Thank you Christopher for participating in this month's interview. His long term perspective and pictures from years of collecting and shows made for one great read.

We are looking for people who would like to participate in our monthly interview. If you are interested, please reach out here: editorobserver1@gmail.com.

A huge, huge thank you to the band for sharing portions of this newsletter in their social channels. Thank you!!!!

Next month The Observer's sound-wave experiment returns with new images of sound waves created by the music. Got a song you'd like to see recorded? Drop a message!

We are on an American Tour!

the warm feels inside us all?

I mean, The Flaming Lips and Modest Mouse, two of my favorite bands of all time on the same bill?!

I could not dream up a better scenario.

As I look around the inter-webs I can see so many excited fans making plans to catch this tour. If anyone is attending these shows and want to send in some pictures, we defiantly could use them in this newsletter.

I am looking forward to catching several of these dates to feel the warmth, and the joy of these two groups. I am so grateful to be able to see these shows. I know with so much uncertainty and chaos of life, not everyone has the same means and ability to catch shows. If this is you, just know I can relate, and hope that peace and good fortune finds you soon. I hope everyone has a safe, and wonderful time getting too, and home from the shows.

If you are reaching out to submit words, pictures or art, I will have limited access to email during this time. I will be checking once a day, so if I do not answer right away, please know, I answer all emails to this newsletter, just be patient and I will get back to you.

The Observer website is almost complete. My goal was to have it completed and published in June, but, my real job got in the way. Once the website is complete, I'll make sure you know. Hopefully the website will be a better place for people to consider sending in submissions. Everyone has a story, and we are all about that!

Please think about referring this newsletter to your friends, or drop the link into your groups or whatever. This newsletter was designed for fans who maybe are not on social media. The mission of this newsletter is to celebrate the fans and the music of The Flaming Lips. We want to create a safe space for those wanting to share stories of their connections to the music and the band.

I am pleased to report The Observer newsletter has about an 80-percent open rate, which is really cool to know that a majority of you who signed up are looking at the newsletter. Keep sending in your stories! And if you want to answer 10 questions and be part of our interviews, we will always include everyone!

Keep positive everyone, keep screaming, and remember to love each other...

PARTING SHOT:

Farewell Yoshimi tour, we loved every minute of it.



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The Observer may not consider any form of advertising or sponsorship. The mission is to celebrate the music, and the lives of those who cherish it. For anyone wanting to contribute words, pictures, art and essays, please feel free to reach out.

Questions?

editorobserver1@gmail.com

Send submissions to: editorobserver1@gmail.com

Thank you for being you,
– J. S. Applewhite

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