





Tim Kerr





Tim and Beth Kerr. Photo by Tim Kerr.

Tim Kerr

Tim Kerr is a musician, studio engineer and visual artist based in Austin, Texas. He played guitar in the Big Boys, an Austin band that was heavily responsible for putting Texas on the map in the punk and hardcore underground.

The Big Boys lasted from 1979-1984. Kerr went on to play in numerous other bands, including Poison 13, Bad Mutha Goose and the Brothers Grimm, MonkeyWrench, Jack O' Fire, Lord High Fixers, King Sound Quartet, the Now Time Delegation, and most recently, Total Sound Group Direct Action Committee. He has also recorded and produced (or, as he modestly says, "... [B]een a guidance counselor,") for dozens of bands on nearly 150 releases.

In addition to all of that, Kerr has increasingly immersed himself in painting and drawing. Since 2000, he has widely exhibited his works, which commonly pay tribute to exactly the kind of musical, social and political revolutionary ass-kickers that one would expect a trailblazer like Kerr to be inspired by.

If Tim Kerr had only played in any one of his bands, or recorded a few of the great records he's helped bring into existence, he would have paid his musical dues and then some. Thankfully, he remains as creatively hyperactive as ever, while paying the bills by working for the University of Texas (UT), along with his wife Beth, where he digitizes audio and video collections for the archives of their libraries.

Tim Kerr is a man of many bands. Keeping track of the similarities and differences between all of the groups he has played with starts to get daunting – particularly where personnel starts to overlap. The Big Boys started in 1979. They were one of the few punk or hardcore bands that got better as they continued and also stopped before they lost their vitality.

The Big Boys featured the late Randy "Biscuit" Turner on vocals: an unselfconscious singer with a killer soul scream. Biscuit was a spirited front man who was known for his wild costumes and for constantly insisting on the audience's participation. This didn't only happen at the Big Boys' shows but in the music scene as a whole, by forming bands, making flyers and publishing fanzines. The muscular funk-influenced bass-playing of Chris Gates and a succession of drummers (all excellent) created a punchy and dynamic sound which Tim Kerr scraped over. Kerr's guitar sound is rhythmic and sharp, with gnarly scrap-yard textures that ride over the propulsive beat.

The band was tight and frenetic and many of their best songs are lean enough to get in and out in about a minute. Live shows and some recordings were enhanced by a horn section led by Chris Gates' brother Nathan and a slew of guys from their high school. Big Boys originals like "We Got Soul" are catchy and infectious and show the band to be unusually open to new ideas, with the skills and power to pull them off. Touch and Go Records re-released the group's music in two compilations spanning their six years of activity: *The Skinny Elvis* (earlier stuff) and *The Fat Elvis* (later recordings). If you have to pick one or the other, perhaps try the Fat one first.

At the end of the Big Boys' run, Kerr formed the band Poison 13 with Big Boys' roadie Mike Carroll on snotty vocals. Kerr's guitar playing here gets swampy. The music is far more blues-influenced, and he adds a nasty slide to his guitar playing.

Bad Mutha Goose and the Brothers Grimm were a large funk ensemble that paid homage to Sly and the Family Stone and Parliament-Funkadelic. The group released one album, *Tower of Babel*, in 1987 and several 12" EPs. In a more perfect world they would have displaced the Red Hot Chili Peppers from history and memory, but we can only dream.

Kerr met Mark Arm and Steve Turner of Mudhoney after a Mudhoney show. The

members of the Seattle-based group proclaimed their love of Poison 13. Arm, Turner, and Kerr soon joined up with Tom Price and Martin Bland to form MonkeyWrench. The group reworked some unrecorded Poison 13 songs and has gone on to release several albums and singles starting in 1992.

Jack O' Fire formed in 1993. They were an all covers band that was heavy on the harmonica, and put their stamp on the music of everyone from Chuck Berry and the Sonics to Joy Division and the Minutemen. By now Tim was having a very productive relationship with the Bellingham, Washington-based garage punk scuzz record label Estrus, and bands like Jack O' Fire released a pile of 7" and 10" records for Estrus on top of the usual CD and LP formats. Aesthetically similar labels like In the Red and Sympathy for the Record Industry also joined the release frenzy and helped find a home for Kerr's prolific production.

When Jack O' Fire ended, a new band rapidly entered the fold, again with Mike Carroll on vocals. In 1996 the first record of the Lord High Fixers was born. We wish we could remember their show at the Empty Bottle in Chicago that happened around this time more lucidly. Suffice it to say that it was a night bathed in guitar feedback, rock energy, sweat and alcohol.

Another unit, the King Sound Quartet, included Mick Collins of the Gories and the Dirtbombs. This group's life overlapped with the Lord High Fixers. The group was short lived and raw – an aggressive garage punk band that also tracked an epic cover of Sun Ra's "Space is the Place." In 2001, In The Red released the first record by yet another band of Kerr's, The Now Time Delegation, which featured Lisa Kekaula (the amazing punk rock and soul singer of the BellRays) belting out both originals as well as covers by the likes of Curtis Mayfield and Eddie Floyd.

Finally, from the seeds of the Lord High Fixers, came Kerr's latest band with Mike Carroll: Total Sound Group Direct Action Committee. Estrus records released the group's first album *The Party Platform...Our Schedule Is Change!*, in 2002. Since then Kerr has been playing in informal sit-in groups that play Irish and old time folk music, and has scored several documentaries including *Who Is Bozo Texino?* by Bill Daniel, whose photos appear in this booklet.

Temporary Services was working on a *Temporary Conversations* booklet on the great Texas punk band the Dicks, when Tim e-mailed us a short remembrance of that band for the booklet. One email led to another and a friendly exchange began to happen. It quickly became clear that we needed to make a publication about Tim Kerr too so we decided to grow this conversation into something more substantial.

Doing justice to any single one of Tim's bands, or any one facet of his work would be no easy task, and we also did not want to force him to look back at any single moment of his work to the exclusion of everything else he has done and continues to do. Most impressive to us was Tim's extremely positive approach to the challenges of living a creative life where all passions merge; this seemed more pressing to convey than the nitty-gritty details of each and every band he has been a member of. For the full discography of Tim's recordings, the full list of records he has worked on by others, and a slew of other information, images and downloads, we highly recommend a visit to the impressive fan site www.timkerr.net.

This booklet was printed in November 2008 in conjunction with Temporary Services' exhibition at testsite and publication presentation at DOMY books, both in Austin, Texas. This exchange with Tim Kerr took place over e-mails with Mare Fischer from Temporary Services between July and September of 2008. Special thanks are due to Harper Montgomery, Mary Katherine Matalon and Kate Watson of Fluent-Collaborative and testsite, and Russell Etchen of DOMY books for assistance and encouragement. We are also thankful to Bill Daniel for the contribution of his photos and Ryan Richardson who provided the numerous photocopied fliers

designed by Tim that we have included throughout the booklet. Most of all, we are grateful to Tim Kerr for his extraordinary kindness and generosity. [Big smile]

Temporary Services (TS): How did you first arrive at playing music?

Tim Kerr (TK): I was aware of art and music for as long as I can remember. I was definitely drawing before I actually played an instrument. I was born in '56 and my brothers are ten and eight years ahead of me, so, early on, I remember the car radio turned on to rock and roll, R&B, soul, and country. Early on, I was gravitating more to soul and R&B than the others. Then the British invasion hit when I was seven or eight and I saw the Beatles on [the] Ed Sullivan [Show]. I started playing guitar then. I took a couple of lessons but was not interested in learning "Down In The Valley" so I just started picking out songs myself and making up songs.

I got really into acoustic music when the first Crosby, Stills and Nash, and James Taylor records came out and started digging deeper. Late '60s, early '70s FM radio was just coming out and was pretty much all over the map. You would hear Cream, then Nick Drake, Free, Pentangle, John Martyn, James Gang, etc. I gravitated towards the acoustic and got really into Bruce Cockburn, Bert Jansch, Nick Drake, and John Martyn. That's all I wanted to play.

Through Taj Mahal, I found out more about country blues and started digging into that as well. I would get a lot of shit in high school because (among other things) I was listening to that stuff instead of say ... Ten Years After (though Alvin Lee playing "I'm Goin' Home" on that *Woodstock* film is pretty damn amazing!). [Smile] I learned about tunings listening to Richie Havens, David Crosby, Joni Mitchell. I would just never stop digging deeper which is something I haven't really lost. I'm really happy for that!

TS: Was your family supportive of you making music from a young age?

TK: Both my brothers were sports-minded so my parents (especially my dad) were pretty happy to have a son that seemed more interested in doing art and music. They were both really supportive! It's funny now, because even though they don't really comprehend the lifestyle Beth and I chose, they are really proud of both of us. My oldest brother has lots of my paintings up in his house. "My little brother did these!" [Smile]

TS: What were your early inspirations for forming a band and where did you find the conviction or models for writing your own songs, having bands, releasing records, and playing concerts? How challenging was it to dive into having a band once you knew it was something you wanted to do?

TK: Uh... [Smile] I guess my inspirations were all the music I was listening to and finding out about. I certainly did not get any from school! When I had scored really high on the music test to see if you were eligible for band, orchestra, or choir, I told the band director that I wanted to play flute and was promptly told it was a girls' instrument! I decided to be in the choir. [Smartass smile] I don't know why early on I started making up songs ... the same with doing art, but I know by high school it was pretty much my "therapy". I did not fit in, did NOT want to fit in with "their" restrictions and was counting the days until I could leave. I spent most of my high school years playing music in my room, or with a couple of friends, and surfing.

I just sort of fell into the band thing with friends after going to [the club] Raul's and seeing my first "punk" shows. As for making records, etc., it really was more of "let's start a band and try to play one show," "let's see if we can put out a single like our friends just did,"

and "let's call up friends in California and see if we can play with them so we have an excuse to go out there and skate!" It was always more like going on a big adventure or vacation where you played some shows between getting to do and see a lot of other stuff. I remember something my brother said when I first got out of high school that I pretty much took to heart: "If you start thinking too hard about why you should or should not do something, you will more than likely never do it."

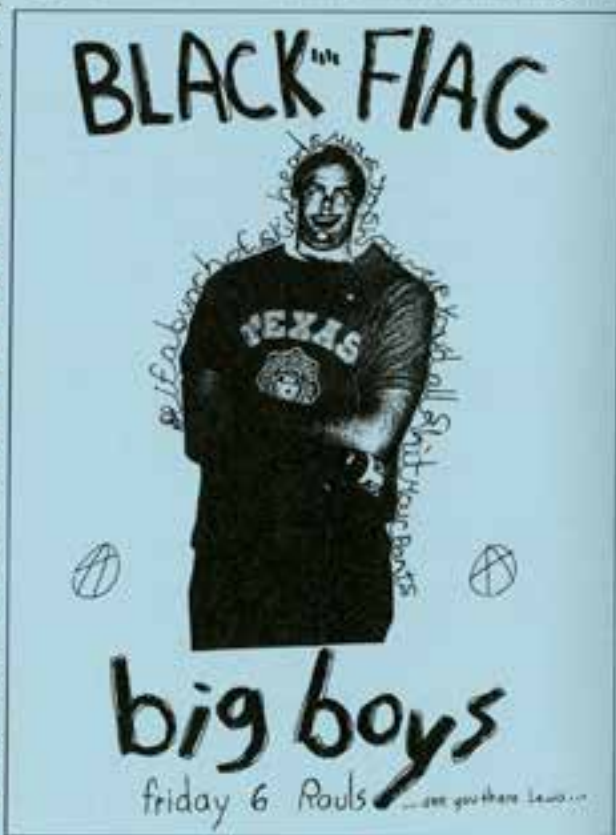
The same sentiment has applied to art as well, and with both and everything, the more you do something, the easier it becomes.

TS: When you first started playing shows and connecting with other bands of a similar spirit outside of Texas, how did that underground network develop and how did you find opportunities to play? Given that all of this happened long before the internet and instant access to everything, what were the primary ways that you found out about bands, got shows, and that others found out about what you were doing?

TK: Back then they had this thing called ... the telephone? [Big smartass smile] There were also people making fanzines so you could read about other scenes. A lot of times, when a band would come through and stay at your house, they would bring some of their local 'zines and those would get passed around. Most everyone was into helping each other so once you met a band you now had more friends that would help.

It was a pretty close-knit group of folks who were more interested in having their

"new" friends come and play for their "old" friends. Or, "look what my one friend is doing ... they made this poster or fanzine." If someone or a band screwed any of your friends over (as in the show was put on badly, no posters, they took all the money, etcetera) word was out soon after and that band or person would not be asked again for help, and in some cases, would not be asked to be on a show. Bands would go home, talk about cool bands they saw on their trip, and the local fanzines would write or call to see if they could maybe do an interview or do an interview with you when you came to their town. I would also like to point out that bands like DOA and Black Flag pretty much "drew the routes" for other bands to go and play by playing anywhere and everywhere they could. They also probably





started a LOT of scenes in those places as well.

TS: One thing we'd like to try to convey with this publication is to hopefully remind people of the challenges that others faced in the past to create music and art that was in opposition to boring mainstream culture, while also bringing things up to the present.

TK: I think that anyone doing something, or just breathing or living for that matter, outside the uniform and descriptions or definitions of others will always face the same problems, but only if you are playing by their rules. As Sun Ra says, "Not of your world." A lot of folks back then were doing nothing more than what the original beats, hippies, etcetera, were doing before each of those movements became a uniform, which was

not what the original idea was. Whatever they call it next is what my friends and I will always be doing. [Smile]

TS: As a member of the Big Boys, who were clearly important to a lot of people, but a person who is still creating new things and has had many bands since, how do you contend with all the interest in your past?

TK: As far as others' recognition of your self-expression, the only problematic part is not falling into "their" notions of what you should and should not do. You obviously (well, I hope) are honored when people bring up old history or want to hear an old song, see an old painting, read an old story, etcetera, and if you are a giving and caring human being, it's human nature to want to grant their request. It becomes frustrating when they absolutely cannot or will not open up to what's come after or before. Its like a switch switches on or off inside of them and you can visibly see it on their face ... [they are] "on" when you talk about that one period or subject, "off" when you go to something else. If one person gets it, it's worth the time! And you might have just planted a seed in them that will affect their self-expression or outlook.

Not to sound smug or above it all, but it really is their problem and not yours. Once again, Sun Ra hit the nail on the head with the statement "Not of your world." [Smile]

There is also the BIG question of, "WHY are you doing what you do?" Is it something that you do like breathing that has no bearing on what anyone else thinks or sees and you have to do it to stay alive, or do you do it for the recognition of others?

TS: At a free jazz show it's much more expected that people will play what they are feeling that night, or working on most recently. No one shouts out song requests from twenty years ago. It's not really part of that music's culture to expect to hear anything other than what people are working on now. A few groups with more of a rock sensibility like the long-running Dutch band The Ex seem to have been able to change this expectation among their fans. The fans know better than to expect them to play much if any of their old music at shows, but I can't think of many other bands like this.

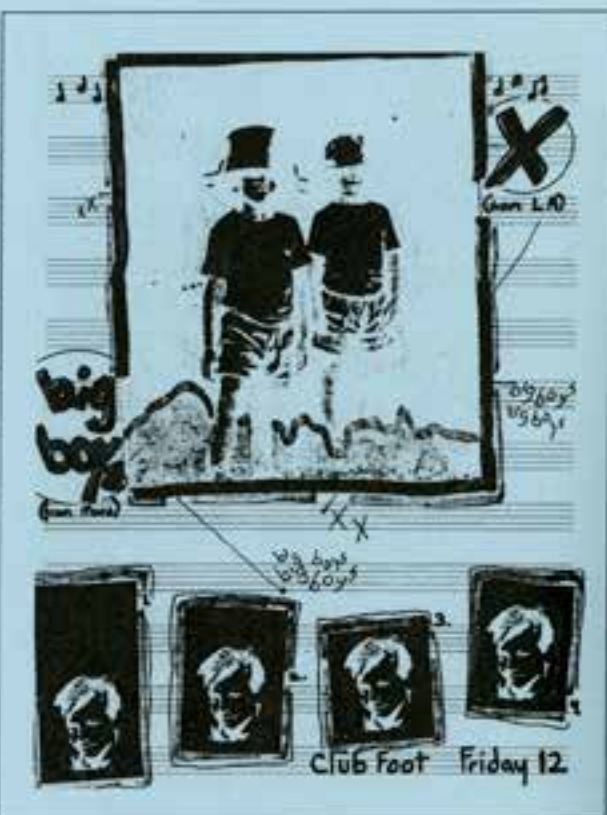
TK: The Ex are a great band and a great example of a band that's become what they are to their audience. The Ex right now! And what they will be doing in the future. They stayed here at one point. Our house has been a sort of band etcetera youth hostel since '78. [Smile]

You know, I always thought it was funny how in this music, if you do things with other folks from other known bands it's always called a "super group." You never really see that in jazz or blues or folk, etc. It almost goes hand in hand with the idea that you are classified always as your one box and not as an individual that's part of a much larger community. It happens in different schools of self-expression as well: "Oh, you're that musician that does art."

To me, self-expression is self-expression and I don't limit it to one thing or the other. If you get down to it, life and just living is self-expression. I have always liked the quote: "If self-expression is supposed to not have any boundaries, why are people constantly trying to put some sort of boundary on it?"

TS: It's a big problem that a thousand people will go see the reunion of some classic hardcore band from the early 1980s yet only twenty people will show up for one of those member's new bands no matter how good the music they're making might be. I've seen a lot of this in recent years when people who were around at the beginning of the hardcore punk scene have tried to do something new.

TK: I spent a LOT of the Touch & Go Records [25th] anniversary telling kids that if they would just go to a show that was happening now that someone was putting on – not in a club, but a house or basement or hall – that's what it was like. I like the idea of [the history] presented in books or on a small group basis, as long as there is a show of the line that will always run



through all of this, and it's not presented as just another scrapbook, because then people can have time to think about what is being said or read, then digest it and think about how that relates to them now. And if it's one on one (or two or three), there is a healthy conversation going and an exchange.

It amazes me how many people who were once open to seeking out things that were not easily presented to them, stop staying open to what's around them at a certain point. Instead they opt to relive that "high school touchdown pass." I am honored and humbled to have been part of that time but in all that's happened before and after, I hope I haven't seen the best thing yet! [Smile] And no matter what happens, that's how I will view and live my life.

TS: Those band reunions can be fun but I think it's more important to see people trying new things.

TK: I have a friend that calls them re-enactments! So that's what we have all been calling them now. [Big smile]

TS: A friend gave me a free ticket to see the Germs with that TV actor standing in on vocals when they toured a couple years ago. I think I lasted through fifteen minutes of their set and I regret my curiosity of wanting to see what that reunion with a different singer would be like. It was a long time before I could enjoy their music again after seeing that show. It felt very misguided and wrong. All of the original folks are still excellent performers. They should have toured behind new projects. Don Bolles (Germs' drummer) makes experimental music and doesn't perform out of L.A. very much as far as I can tell. I wish that he would have come to Chicago to play THAT stuff!

TK: I think they should go all the way and start re-enacting specific shows that have now become legendary because of the stories. [Smile] Do what the Civil War re-enactment folks have been doing for a while now. [Big smile]

TS: This is something that perhaps locals can't stand being asked about, or is maybe a touch political, but how do you feel the South By Southwest (SXSW)¹ music festival has impacted Austin culturally? How have things changed over the years as this festival has grown and become part of the city's international identity? Obviously the economic impact on the town must be huge, but does it impact your work at all, or generate a lasting sense of local creative vitality?

TK: Well, this could be a couple of books in itself! [Smartass smile]

By the late '80s, there were folks getting pretty disgusted by it (including myself) and finally sometime in the early '90s, I took Sun Ra's philosophy of "Not of this world" to heart. [Big smile] For me it made the weeklong SXSW festival a whole lot easier to deal with.

You have to realize that the people (three or four) that started the *Austin Chronicle* and SXSW, all were going to Raul's in the early days. It's kinda like if the cool lunchroom table clique all of a sudden started running the school administration. It IS sort of proof that you CAN do something, but in this case, to me, greed set in early and it turned bad.

¹ SXSW is described on the festival's website (www.sxsw.com) thusly: SXSW is a private company based in Austin, Texas, with a year-round staff of professionals dedicated to building and delivering conference and festival events for entertainment and related media industry professionals. Since 1987, SXSW has produced the internationally recognized Music and Media Conference & Festival.

Every year the festival gets bigger in terms of the people coming and bands playing, AND every year the price goes up! BUT the clubs only make their money from beer sales (which is a lot). Most of the people working at the festival are doing it as volunteers for a free wristband, and at this point lots of big name sponsors with money are involved as well. SO, where is all that money going?!

The bands sure aren't getting much of it and most (not all) of them paid a fee just to have their tape heard (which does not mean you have been accepted and get a show).

Just to give you an example of why I think greed has played such a strong hand: there started to be LOTS of free parties where bands played during the day. Some were sponsored, but a lot more were not. Local record stores, clothes shops and group houses would (and do) have shows for bands which people may not be able to see on the bands' official SXSW showcase. Not because they don't have a wristband but maybe the showcase club will be filled to capacity that night and will be hard to get in. A wristband does NOT guarantee that you will get into a club at all times. Maybe there were two other bands playing showcases all at the same time on the same night that you wanted to see. Maybe you didn't buy a wristband. The SXSW folks tried everything to stop it, because in their eyes, they were losing money from these free shows. They told (and tell) bands that if they play one of these free parties, they will have their "showcase" show taken away from them. Most bands took their chances anyway, AND there started to be bands playing the free parties that had never applied with SXSW. Every year there were more free parties and for SXSW it was a losing battle.

The year before last, 2007, they decided on another strategy and put out the word that if you sent in details about your free party, they would publish it. BUT they also took the list to the fire department and police and in the guise of "goodwill and safety", said "This is a potential safety or fire hazard and someone could get hurt. Most of these unsanctioned parties will be filled to over capacity and if you are going to check 'our' showcases, then you need to check these parties as well. Besides, they are probably running these free parties without a permit."

Most of all the free parties were shut down that year! On a good note: the next year, 2008, people got permits and there were MORE free parties! [Big smile]

Since bands don't make much, if any, money at the festival (they get a choice of a wrist band for each band member or \$125 for the whole band (as of last year), a lot of bands are only here for their showcase day and night and will play Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio around their date to pay for the trip. SXSW does not like the idea of these bands taking the wristband option and then selling or giving them to friends, so SXSW have also been doing what they can to clamp down on this activity, because in their eyes, that's more money that should be in their pockets.

The city LOVES this festival because it generates LOTS of money for the city. It's like Christmas sales for a business. But the rest of the year its back to fines for posters, fines for double parking when you are loading in your equipment, and the city trying to pass noise ordinances on clubs, all the while sending out the promo of "live music capital of the world." Of course, the noise ordinance, if passed, will be lifted when SXSW is going on.

As far as the "music biz," since I am not part of that scene, from what I can tell, most of the label people coming down here might as well be wearing funny hats and throwing water balloons out of hotel and car windows. It's a BIG PARTY to be "seen" at.

On the good side, we do get to see a lot of friends we haven't seen in a while and I know small labels, bands, and promoters get to meet and talk with folks that they may have only talked to by phone or email.

Some of the free party shows are great too. [Big smile]

As far as me and my self-expression? SXSW has nothing to do with what I am doing. Some of the people in this town doing things probably feel the same way I do.

The creative vitality comes from people. It will be there with or without organized functions. My friends, or friends that I have just met because they were here for the festival, or any other time for that matter – people who are “burning bright” because they have to – are always a light for me and are all inspirational in their own ways regardless.

TS: Well, if we wanted to delve into the myriad ways that artists and musicians and the publics who need them are treated as less than human when cities claim to act in everyone's best interests and for the betterment of cultural life, I imagine we'd have a very thick book between Austin and Chicago.

There has been a huge outcry in Chicago lately over a proposed Promoter's Ordinance that would essentially cripple small and mid-sized local music events if it goes through in anything resembling what is proposed. It would certainly make it very dangerous to operate in an underground way. Among the items on the table: forcing individual promoters to buy liability insurance for every event even if the club they are using already has it, fees of up to \$2,000 every two years for putting on events, fingerprinting and running background checks on all promoters, and on and on. The penalties for putting on the kind of free parties you describe would be severe.

Sun Ra keeps coming up, including in this last response, so perhaps we could spend a little time talking about him and what he means to you. You contributed a work to the Sun Ra-focused “Interstellar Low Ways” exhibit at the Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago in 2006. During that show, there was a concurrent exhibit of archival materials: “Pathways to Unknown Worlds: Sun Ra, El Saturn & Chicago's Afro-Futurist Underground, 1954-68.” It really showed how much of a hand Sun Ra maintained in every aspect of his work. The music, art, writing, clothing, the business organization of releasing his music and ideas, and his way of being in the world all appeared seamlessly interconnected. It was deeply inspiring. Do you have a similar sense of his work and is having this kind of total aesthetic something you are interested in? Also, how did you first come to his music? Is it a touchstone you return to repeatedly and how has that influence manifested itself in your work?

TK: I had known the name Sun Ra for a pretty good while but really was not completely “ready” for that sort of music 'til around 1990. [Embarrassed smile] A lot of factors sort of came together. I was working in a mailroom at UT (along with another UT job and a stained glass studio job) with Jim Kieke who would be playing anything from free jazz to 20th century composers, to punk rock, at all times. PG [Moreno] worked there as well and was constantly bring music and that's where I first actually heard Sun Ra.

PG has since become the main free jazz promoter here and has kept the shows at lower prices and ALL AGES! He came from the early DIY days as a fan going to shows but definitely realized the potential of DIY, and just like oral tradition, you need to keep it going if you can. Byron Coley among others were coming and staying at the house for the big Austin record convention and they were all ‘in’ to this music as well. There were lots of discussions about The Art Ensemble Of Chicago, Pharoah Sanders, Sun Ra, etcetera. I was already a big fan of John Coltrane but hadn't really been ready for anything after *A Love Supreme*. The Pharoah Sanders *Black Unity* album that Byron told me to buy was the record that opened up every door and window inside of me and sent me on course with the ammo that all sound is valid. I have never looked back! [Smile]

I read *Space Is The Place* [by Sun Ra], and along with Roland Kirk's *Bright Moments*,

this book was full of "Oh, that's how you say that feeling I have!" moments. For about a year, I was trying to get all my friends to read it! [Smile] Things that should be so obvious are made clear by simple statements: "history is his story." I was hooked. I finally had words to a lot of thoughts I was having. I started applying these thoughts to the music I was involved in and was honored when I got to record some things with Ken Vandermark (Chicago's own) on a Lord High Fixers record. Hearing the music and seeing shows that PG was now putting on just solidified the idea that life should be a joyful noise indeed and when it comes to others' restrictions on self expression, it's their loss and I am not of their world. [Big smile]

People like Sun Ra who do what they do no matter what the odds are, and create something positive if you are ready to receive it, are ALWAYS inspirational. I was so humbled and honored to be asked to be in that show!

TS: While I never got to see Sun Ra perform, writings and videos reveal that there was a strong "event" quality to those shows, with the band proceeding through the audience to the stage, and a high level of theatricality with dancers and incredibly elaborate costumes. The audience was truly immersed in a highly particular and detailed musical universe.

TK: Yep, but I'm not so sure it was so much theatrical as much as just wanting to show that there were other ways to look at things presented to you, and the possibilities of taking advantage of the FIVE senses instead of limiting yourself to just two.

TS: Theatricality had a strong place in Texas punk rock, between the Huns, the Dicks, Butthole Surfers, and the Big Boys. Where do you think that came from?

TK: I'm not so sure that that was just confined to Texas. [Smile]

It's hard for people to grasp now what it was like back then because the "uniform"



Big Boys: Biscuit and Tim Kerr. Photo by Bill Daniel.

is so set now for what punk "now" is and means. The same with trying to visualize what Hippie or Beatnik were really like before they were bagged and tagged and the visuals given to them were firmly planted in our brains. Punk at that point (before hardcore) was a celebration of self-expression and a big shout (sound and visual) to others that not everyone wanted what society was selling. The idea that you could go your own route, make your own music, clothes, art! If someone had a problem with that then that was their problem and you just exposed them. BUT you had just as much right to do your thing as anyone.

That's pretty much the original ideas of Beats, Hippies, Surrealists and any other crew of like-minded folks that got together and still get together to do something else other than

what was expected of them. Its funny to me that hippies, who were supposed to come from live and let live philosophies, seemed to have the hardest time with this new "punk look" (at least in Austin). It was a given you were gonna get shit from the others: jocks, frats, kickers. You also got shit from all these folks for skating as well, even before punk rock came into view, but that's another book. [Big smile].

Theatrics makes me think of something that is put on for a show. For a lot of folks back then, this was 24/7. Biscuit would dress up in all sorts of crazy getups just to go to the store, or take a walk to "wake up the norms." He did this well before Punk when it was known as "letting your freak flag fly high!" If your hair was green, your hair was green, and there was not a lot you could do about it when you walked into work.

You were making a statement 24/7. In the big picture at that time, this was a small segment of society and for all the others, they had no clue or definition yet as to what was going on. You got the same reaction from them as if you were walking around naked ... just complete disbelief, which a lot of times turned to anger.

The last thing you wanted to do if you decided to start a band was to resemble anything that was defined as a band in "their" eyes at that time ('70s rock, The Eagles, Steely Dan) and since visuals played such a big part in this, it was pretty obvious that shows were going to be pretty visual.

Maybe a difference here in Texas back then was that it was not a lot of jaded hipster artists, but more like lots of like-minded crazies whose alarms had already gone off and they were all now wide awake! Waiting on the edge of their seat for this celebration to finally



My Skin is white. My Shirt is lead
My car is big and Im in a fraternity

Im an ignorant dumbass and I
like it!

happen.

But once again I don't think this visual celebration was confined to Texas bands. I do think there is an attitude here though that makes us all, for better or worse, stick out like a sore thumb everywhere else. [Smile]

TS: Also it seems like there was a strong merging of the audience and the bands, which the Big Boys encouraged by bringing people onstage and adding horn sections at shows and constantly encouraging people to start their own bands. Was there a deliberate attempt to break through the barrier between band and audience, or did people's enthusiasm force this situation to happen?

TK: The audience was the bands in those days! It was one big (well small) community and just about everyone was doing something to contribute. Shows were probably more like happenings than what is defined as a show now. Also lots of people took to heart the idea that everyone could and should participate in self-expression. So anytime you could get someone else involved and out of their slumber, you did. We just happened to do it with a microphone.

TS: Was this dynamic possible to maintain in other places when Big Boys toured? Did a lot of the theatricality hinge on Biscuit's personality and performance style, and is it something you've tried to retain in your other bands as well?

TK: By the time we were really touring, the term hardcore had taken hold of the US so the "uniform" was already being stitched and worn. When we showed up in a different state (a lot of the Texas bands for that matter) people didn't know what to think of any of us. We didn't look like them; we didn't sound like them, etcetera, but once we started, most realized what was going on and it wasn't hard to get them to join in.



Big Boys: L to R: Tim Kerr, Fred Shultz, Biscuit, Chris Gates. Photo by Bill Daniel.

This reminds me of a story that happened just a year ago. A band from Israel had come to Emo's to play. An amazing band who were not confined to the rules of a band, stage, etcetera. The band that opened for them were kids and had on the finest that Hot Topic had to offer and played their part as "punk band" to a T. When the Israeli band started, it was like a bomb had gone off. They took off in all directions and I don't think for the forty minutes they played, they were EVER back on the stage. They were in front of you, behind you, on the bar ... it was GREAT! And at one point I saw one of the kids in the other band in all his punk glory looking horrified at what was going on in front of him. I wanted sooo bad to lean over and tell the kid, "THIS is what its about" but was worried his parents, who were also looking horrified and confused, might think I was trying to proposition the kid. [Big smile]

TS: Recently I went back and listened to both Big Boys compilations: *The Skinny Elvis* and *The Fat Elvis* and I was struck by something I had never actually noticed before. Correct me if I'm wrong but I don't think I heard a guitar solo in a single Big Boys song. Was it a deliberate song-writing decision, or were there any group debates about having or not having guitar solos in the songs? Nothing against a tasteful, well-executed guitar solo (or the crazed wooly slide guitar noise blow outs that are so enjoyable in Poison 13!) but as a listener of the Big Boys it makes me constantly feel locked in to how the band is working as a total unit – the role everyone's playing in the songs feels quite balanced to me. What do you think?

TK: I never thought of myself as anything but a rhythm player. Still do. There are a few solos: "No", "The Seed", "We Got Your Money" (off the top of my head), but for the most part, no, there were not any solos and it was intentional on my part. Same thing in Bad Mutha Goose, where I just wanted to sit in the pocket of the groove. When we first started this was all supposed to be a sort of reaction to how ridiculous rock music had become with lengthy drum solos, guitar solos, etcetera.

I can't remember the band name but there was an east coast band that covered "No". It was on a comp with a lot of 3rd or 4th generation hardcore when it had become a lot more metal sounding. I was laughing (in appreciation) because the guitar player had my lead in that song down pat with all the metal ornaments added. [Big smile] That lead was wherever my fingers hit – no pattern – and if I landed on a wrong note, I bent it up. If I had been into free jazz at that point, I probably wouldn't have done even that. [Smile] I kept thinking that the guitar player copying this solo was probably going crazy trying to figure out my "pattern" or logic. I later met him when I was in Philly recording Delta 72 and yep, he said he had a time trying to get it.

Most of the so-called solos in everything else have always (hopefully) been a sort of pushing the limits of what a "solo" is supposed to be.

None of this has ever been or will be a sort of showoff thing to me so I just don't think in terms of solos. It has always been more about the celebration of self-expression with friends.

TS: On that tip – it often gets said after the fact that punk was reacting to the excesses of classic rock with the endlessly long solos and longer more meandering songs. At the time that you guys were actually writing the music, in 1979 say, how much was this shift, and the need to cut out all the excessive indulgent crap, getting talked about by musicians in that moment? Did everyone really go see Emerson Lake and Palmer or Yes and just say, "Enough already!"?

TK: Killing '70s rock excesses was a pretty big deal then. [Big smile] It had gotten to the point where you had to be a virtuoso on your selected instrument if you wanted to even attempt to

play Yes songs, Emerson Lake and Palmer, Rush, etcetera. Nothing wrong with being a virtuoso, but it was becoming more and more unobtainable for most people to participate.

TS: In discussing South By Southwest, you stated that the festival has nothing to do with what you're doing, which I interpret to mean that attempting to start a million dollar bidding war over the rights to releasing your music between multiple major record labels is not in the Tim Kerr program.

TK: Actually what I am saying is, that I do what I do and made a decision a long time ago that I never wanted to be in a situation where money played a big factor in my choices and decisions when it comes to self expression (mine or helping anyone with theirs). I'm not against getting paid, it's just that's not why I do what I do. I also am not doing this for reviews, fame, etcetera.

It's nice to get a nod of approval or a smile of respect, but that is not why I do what I do. I only hope in my own way that what I do can be some sort of a positive force to push someone else a little further along with their self expression.

TS: Could you talk a little about some of the record labels that you have worked with over the years, how those relationships developed, and what kind of relationship you look for with the people that release your music? I'm thinking particularly of the labels Sub Pop, Touch & Go, Estrus, Sympathy For The Record Industry, and In The Red – all of which are labels that have long histories of thinking and operating in quite different ways than multi-national corporate giants.

TK: These people ask. We talk and then I either work with them or I don't. [Smile] If they seem to be on the same page as me about community and self-expression, then no contract is needed. I take them for their word and feel strongly that if someone is the type of person that is going to take advantage of you (screw you over), they are going to do that with or without a piece of paper.

Corey Rusk, who runs Touch and Go, is one of the finest people you will ever have the honor of meeting. Dave Crider as well. It's not confined to just music either. Rich Jacobs, Needles and Pens, Bill Daniel ... all I am honored to work with when asked.

TS: You've had a particularly productive relationship with Estrus Records, not just as an artist who has had music released by the label, but also as a producer who has worked on a lot of their releases. I'm extra interested in the many records you produced by the Washington band, the Makers. First of all, as an aside, their records through the 1990s are ferociously ass-kicking garage punk masterpieces – particularly *Hunger* which I have played the living fuck out of, and am listening to right now to drown out the sounds of military fighter planes rehearsing for the Chicago Air and Water Show.

TK: I think the *Fuck You* record is my favorite of theirs. Those guys are the real deal and definitely part of my extended family now.

TS: Mike Maker is perhaps one of the few singers to have a voice as snotty sounding as your long-time band cohort Mike Carroll, so there seems to be a strong aesthetic continuity there.

TK: I think both Mike and Michael would be honored by your comparison. [Smile]

TS: How did you come to work with them for so many recordings?

TK: It seems that when I get asked to come into the studio with a band, we end up being family when it is over and I keep getting asked back. I can only hope its because of the way I approach recording. That's a question you would have to ask the bands.

TS: You've produced over thirty records for Estrus alone. Is there a philosophy shared by you and Estrus label honcho Dave Crider about what a rock record should sound like, or how records should be made? Do the bands pick you or does Estrus pick you to work with their bands?

TK: There is definitely a shared philosophy about life and breathing in general. Dave and Bekki both are really great folks.

As far as how records sound, well, they should sound like the band that's going to be on the record. [Smartass smile]

Bands generally ask me or ask someone that knows me. I ask sometimes.

TS: You and your wife Beth just celebrated your 30th wedding anniversary – which is not just to say that you've been married for thirty years, but that you two have been together through pretty much your entire history of playing in bands. With all of the challenges of being a musician and artist, traveling a lot for your work, and the kind of turmoil that this way of being in the world can create, this strikes me as something particularly extraordinary and special. What has it been like to share in all of this creative work so intimately with another person for so long? Can you assess how the relationship has impacted your art and music along the way? Have any long-term relationship advice for other musicians and artists?!

TK: Beth and I started out as best friends, really close like brother and sister. Maybe that's one tip: you should be best friends not just lovers. She will tell people August – October '78 was a next "life" step for us because that was the period we got married (after living together for four years). We both started working at the University of Texas, and the band stuff all started up. I have always worked a regular job or jobs through all of the bands and recording and now art shows, so that's helped. She has also always come on tours and trips when she can so for the most part it's always been a shared experience. Maybe that's another tip: the more shared experiences the stronger the roots? There was a period during Bad Mutha Goose (a band I AM really proud of) [Smile], where we were gone A LOT and Beth was telling me that it was hard for her to have a routine at home by herself and then I would come home for a couple of days and the routine would go out of sync, and then I would be gone again.

You have to realize that Beth and I were together and had jobs before all this started up, so I have always had one foot firmly planted in "reality" no matter how unreal or absurd the self-expression world got or gets. That's probably another tip. [Smile]

I have no idea what would have happened if I hadn't had Beth but I do KNOW that she has made things so much easier and because she is a constant to me just like breathing, she is definitely a part of my self-expression and what comes out of that. It IS a work in progress and just like a band, you have to give and take if it's something important to you and you want it to work. Beth is extremely important to me.

TS: That's fantastic that she has been able to travel so much with you and that you've been able to have all of those eye-opening experiences of seeing the world together. Musicians and artists

are perhaps among the few non-corporate types who, if they happen to create things that people in other places want to see, can get to travel quite widely for their work – to play, exhibit, or lecture far beyond where they live. Lots of people, who may have pretty secure well-paying jobs, have to make an incredible special effort to do something like fly to another country. Our group has been lucky in that we've been able to see some pretty wonderful and distant parts of the world at the invitation and with the support of institutions, or people who found funding to bring us somewhere. This isn't usually something we've been able to extend to our significant others, however.

TK: They don't pay for Beth either but we sort of look at it like, "Hey, we can both go to this place for the price of one!"

TS: I'd like to spend some time talking about the emergence of your practice as a visual artist. You mentioned that you've been drawing even longer than you've been making music. When did you start publicly exhibiting your work? How did that come about? Did you make flyers for your bands and if so, did that ever feel like an exhibition format to you, or was it more just a way to get the word out and get people to shows?

TK: Just the fact that you dress yourself is "exhibiting your work." [Smile] I have such a different attitude about all this stuff and I can't stress enough that I **KNOW** music and drawing, or painting and skating, are physically different actions, but I just don't see any of them as separate from each other. The older I get it becomes more apparent to me that all of this is wrapped up in the act of breathing and life. I can tell you about early experiences, but like breathing, I can't tell you why I started. I just do it to stay alive.



Tim at an exhibition of his work in Austin, Texas. Photo by Beth Kerr.

My very first exhibit was winning a fire prevention poster contest at the county fair. [Smile] I went to art school and got a degree in studio art (painting and photography). If UT had had a guitar degree at that time, I probably would have chosen that instead. I had a solo show here in Austin when I first got out of school ('78), but then I got swept up in the DIY/Punk community that was just starting up here.

Flyers back then were not just for shows but also lots of social comments about things that had just happened or visuals or thoughts that might make you think or at least get a reaction from the viewer and yep, I did them along with others. It was sort of the same idea as tagging. I will say that it was sort of surreal when I saw that book *Fucked Up & Photocopied: Instant Art of the Punk Rock Movement* in a store and first realized, "Hey! There're posters I did in this coffee table art book! Wow!!!"

In the Big Boys, Chris [Gates], Biscuit, and I all did art so we would take turns on the records. "You get the cover this time, I get the back, and Chris, you get the insert." The whole exhibiting in galleries, that has started in early 2000 for me, was kicked into gear by a Halloween art show in San Francisco put on by my close friends Brian Flynn and his wife Dora Drimalas. Soon after, Rich Jacobs, who was also in that show, got a hold of me and started putting me in his *MOVE* shows. We have become really close and a finer person you will not find.

TS: A lot of your art focuses on people that you revere in music and culture like John Coltrane, Sun Ra, Dock Boggs, Rosa Parks and others from the civil rights movement such as the Black Olympians that gave the raised fist salute. In looking back over the bands you've played in, you've played a lot of covers over the years. Jack O' Fire only played covers and *The Destruction of Squaresville* has songs by everyone from Negative Approach to Hound Dog Taylor, the Sonics, Chuck Berry and Joy Division. First of all, it has to be said that you guys really made those songs your own. I never would have imagined a harmonica showing up in a song like Negative Approach's "Can't Tell No One" but there it is and it works, and furthermore, it makes me wonder why there couldn't be more harmonica solos in hardcore!

Would you say that your love of other people's music and that history fuels your art and, perhaps, vice versa? Is it just another way to connect with, reflect on, and extend all of that creativity, history and culture?

TK: Yep, that's pretty much it. [Big smile] Like I said earlier, all of this is connected to me. All an example of positive self-expression and the idea that you never know when you have influenced someone by you just being you. The fact is, everyone leaves some sort of mark on someone else everyday. I am hoping that mine will be a positive one.

TS: How would you compare the experience of having an exhibit to something like releasing a new album?

TK: It's pretty different. Having an art show is probably closer to playing a show for people. When a record comes out, its all sort of after the fact. You don't have that face-to-face of presenting something in front of people.

TS: Do you find the more solitary act of painting and drawing to be a welcome reprieve from the more collaborative aspects of playing in a band?

TK: Yep. [Big smile] It's great collaborating with people, but it's also nice to do completely

what you want to do on your own as well.

TS: How have you found the world of galleries and exhibition spaces in comparison to the world of clubs? Is the treatment generally better or more equitable in your experience or does it vary widely from venue to venue?

TK: It varies. You have the big business established galleries just like the big business established clubs and the indie galleries like indie clubs and the people putting on art shows in their house or renting out places for shows the same way others put on music shows. It seems to me that the "established" art world is not too far removed from the "music biz" world and they try to dictate what's hip to the masses.

In art though they also set the bar pretty high on cost for the product so that a lot of folks can't own what they might like. Almost like an exclusive club that's making sure only certain people can get in. It also seems (like music), that it's not so much the art but who you know and who they know. Just like music, they want to put you in a box: graffiti, drawing, illustrator, painter or "musician that does art." "Musician that does art" seems to NOT be on the same level to them as an "art artist." I think in their eyes you are lower [Smile] because you



Portrait of Rosa Parks by Tim Kerr.

are involved in another world instead of one and the same: self expression. And what does Sun Ra say? [Big smartass smile]

TS: Stylistically, but also perhaps in how it inhabits the world, your art reminds me a little of the work of Sister Corita, who made extraordinary graphics that the art world has been very slow to care about. Her work could happily co-exist in schools, at protests, in people's homes, or in galleries. Because the notion of a cool politically conscious nun with incredible design skills remains almost incomprehensible to many in the commercial art world, her work is still criminally neglected and infinitely more affordable than a thousand more commercial and gallery-centered artists of her generation (of course the affordability is a good thing – and very much a result of the fact that printmaking was her primary medium). Is her art familiar to you and did it have any influence?

TK: Crazy you should mention her. I did a drawing of her a couple of months ago and will be doing a painting soon. I was aware of her art in the 60s but not so much aware of her 'til a couple of years ago. One of the big plusses in my subject matter for my paintings is that I keep finding more names and stories to look for and that leads to more names, etcetera. Sister Corita and her art are really great and a good example of something positive and/or thought provoking.

I think the whole "categories" thing in both art and music (life as well) keeps those hinders securely fastened in that world and to be truthful, I am not really concerned with "their" world, their rules, their tastes. The real question is why are YOU doing what YOU do? How do you define your success? By their definitions or yours?

TS: Figures from the civil rights movement and from Black radical groups like the Black Panthers and people like Angela Davis have also figured quite prominently as subjects in your art and music.

TK: Yep, along with American Indians such as Atha Rider, social changers like the Diggers, oral history keepers such as Harry Smith, musicians such as John Coltrane or Woody Guthrie, sports figures like Lou Gehrig, or everyday folks who overcome any sort of handicap like Bill Porter, etcetera. It's the idea that anyone is capable of influencing someone else and that could cause some sort of change positive or negative. I choose to show the folks that did something positive instead of negative in their actions.

TS: Certainly, in addition to massive ideas and efforts toward social change, a group like the Black Panthers also had very thoughtfully conceived and striking visuals and a powerful command of language. As with Sister Corita's work, this is something that many in the arts are just now discovering, or rediscovering – particularly with the current exhumation and examination of all things 1968. What are your points of entry into this time? Was it something that affected you strongly as a child or teen growing up in the 1960s?

TK: I was born in '56 and even though I was in a small gulf coast town, when the 60s really hit, it was all over the TV, magazines, radio, etc. You talked about it and had class papers about it in school. Everything around you, including fashion and music, was making some sort of statement so it was pretty hard NOT to be affected by it. As far as my entry point, I guess I grew up with it. [Smile]

TS: How and when did your political conscience emerge and why do you think these people and groups still resonate so strongly for you?

TK: It's the idea that a person or a group of people can get together and by their actions, cause a reaction for change. It's a timeless idea that comes with good and bad results. Its been here as long as time and will be here 'til the end of time. It's always amazing to me that with most all of these so called movements or groups, no matter how fucked up or absurd some might be, there is always one point that they might have that's hitting the nail square on the head! As far as a political conscience, I think mine is more a human being conscience. I have never been a big fan of any sort of organized institution and the sad thing is that a lot of these grass roots groups with great ideas end up going that route either by the originators or the masses that join. What they achieved before going that route though is completely noteworthy and inspirational in most cases.



Above: Portrait of Barbara Jordan. Right: Portrait of Ruby Hurley. Both by Tim Kerr.



Ruby Hurley -
opened first
permanent NAACP office
in Birmingham, ALA.
could be riding down the street and white men could drive
by and say 'we can't get you'.



A drawing of the Irish fiddler Junior Crehan by Tim Kerr.

TS: Are there any contemporary political groups or figures whose ideas and approach have a similar level of intrigue for you?

TK: The ones we don't know about yet. [Smile]

TS: One of the things that I think is really beautiful in your musical, creative life practice is that you have these ongoing collaborations that date back many years, like with singer Mike Carroll, or Dave Crider from Estrus Records, but then you've also allowed for an openness to start new bands with new people like Lisa Kekaula from the BellRays who sang in The Now Time Delegation – almost on a whim from the looks of it – when you encounter others with a shared spirit.

TK: It just makes sense to me; be loyal to your friends and if you find others who are “burning bright and celebrating their self-expression” invite them in, because they already are part of your family.

TS: You also seem to have this insistence on keeping things on a very human scale, even to the point of not just avoiding giant festivals that are too tied up in money or corporate involvements, but really actively favoring tiny DIY venues, or free all ages shows in homes or galleries, or wherever else. A lot is lost when we lose intimacy and with the kind of giant festival mania that is rampant all over the world for live music. It's exciting to hear someone with a long history in music advocate so strongly for intimacy.

TK: Well, I have played festivals before, but always make a point to try if I can, to break down that barrier of “artist to audience.” When MonkeyWrench played Wembley with Pearl Jam, I jumped off the stage and handed my guitar to the first person I met in the crowd saying, “Here, now YOU are playing at Wembley.” I found out later that Mark [Arm] jumped down behind me and started kissing people in the crowd. Gotta love that!!! [Big smile]

The whole reason I got involved with the punk scene to begin with was that there was no barrier (physical or invisible) between band and audience. It was all one big community.



Tim Kerr letting the audience take over. Photographer unknown.

Big Boys



Really Red

Some of us have never forgotten that. Once again it goes to that question, "Why are you doing what you do?" To each his own.

TS: Ultimately, you've been able to keep going full tilt for over three decades with a remarkably positive attitude, but also on a scale that seems manageable. How much of this is by design? How much is this scale something you try to retain in order to keep things positive, interesting and fun, and how much would you say it's a consequence of having a practice that exists somewhat on the margins?

TK: Just the fact that anyone is interested at all in what you do is pretty amazing. [Smile] There has never really been much of a plan other than to try and stay open to things going on around

me, and if an opportunity arises that is something I might want to do or someone is asking me for help, try and figure out a way to do it. It's pretty simple really and the only downside is there starts to not be enough time in a day so you have to just work harder if you want it to happen. It's not an exclusive plan; it's open to any and everyone.

Whose margins are we talking about here? I have always thought that you can color in and outside the lines! [Smartass smile]

TS: Do you feel like you've been able to accomplish the kind of things that you originally set out to do creatively – to have the kind of experiences and work with the kind of people that appeal to you or do you feel like some things should have been a lot bigger than they were or found much larger audiences than they did?

TK: Well once again just the fact that something I was a part of has made you, Marc, want to ask me questions, talk to me, and then you want to publish that conversation is pretty amazing and humbling. It's all been icing on the cake for me and as proud and happy as I am to have been part of all that's happened or happening now, I hope I haven't seen the best thing yet or heard, felt, tasted, and or done the best thing yet.

TS: Any final parting advice for how to stay inspired and excited about playing in bands and maintaining one's creativity well into adulthood?

TK: Stay wide open, class is always in session! [Big smile] Now go start your own publishing company, or gallery, or movement, or your own band!



Tim and Beth in Denver, 2008. Photo by Lindsey Kuhn.

Selected Discography by Tim Kerr

I chose one release from each band I was in.
You will find a more extensive list on: www.timkerr.net

Big Boys - Touch And Go reissues all recordings on 2 CDs
Skinny Elvis (1993)
Fat Elvis (1993)

Poison13 - Sub Pop reissues all recordings
"Wine Is Red Poison Is Blue" (1994)

Bad Mutha Goose and The Brothers Grimm
Tower Of Babel (Alpha International 1987)

MonkeyWrench
Gabriel's Horn (Birdman Records 2008)

Jack O Fire
Beware The Soulless Cool (1+2 Records Japan 1996)

Lord High Fixers
The Beginning Of The End, The End Of The Beginning (In The Red 2002)

King Sound Quartet
The Get Down Imperative (In The Red 1997)

Now Time Delegation
Watch For Today (In The Red 2001)

Total Sound Group Direct Action Committee
Our Schedule Is Change (Estrus 2002)



Jack O' Fire LP and the most recent MonkeyWrench LP with cover art by Tim Kerr.



TEMPORARY CONVERSATIONS

We have a great appreciation for the interview format. When researching a favorite subject or person, it seems we always prioritize the interview as a primary source of information and inspiration. Essays can be effective too, but reading about someone's work, in their own words, often with a tone that makes you feel like you are sitting in the room with them, is particularly satisfying and sometimes feels more trustworthy as a reference.

Too often when we go looking for interviews with people whose work we admire, we find that they either don't exist, were done a very long time ago, or don't focus on the aspects of their work that we want to know about. This frustration has led us to conduct our own interviews where we get to choose the focus and ask the questions.

Frequently, when people conduct interviews, they have to be severely edited to fit within the confines of a book or magazine. While it's not any fun to try to follow the transcript of a rambling, fragmented conversation, sometimes too much nuance, detail and personality gets lost in the editorial condensation process.

Temporary Conversations is a series where each booklet will focus on a single interviewee or subject. The booklets can be as long as they need to be. For us they will be an opportunity to connect with and spread the ideas of creative people of multiple generations. Some will be people we have a long history with. Others will be folks that we've never met, feel rather in awe of, and needed to work up the nerve to contact for the first time. We'd also be happy to see others conduct interviews that we publish but do not participate in so if you have ideas for someone you'd like to have a temporary conversation with, please contact us.

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