

FADE TO BLACK

1982-1984 with Paulette Rees-Denis, Jeff Rees, Brad Orgeron, Gil Ray

(1986- other members including Greg Langston, David Warren, Sam Henry, Scott Campbell, Nick Petti, Dana Woodaman)

all lyrics: Orgeron

music: see below...

Orgeron's Blog about our songs and sets and shows...

BLACK BOX :

(orgeron/rees-denis)

Actually the last song recorded for the Corridors of Gender ep & by far, my fave. Built around a repetitive guitar drone & keyboard figure, this one always sounded like the opening theme in some biblical epic, King Of Kings perhaps. Quasi-mystical lyrics & an odd time-signature on the drums, pulled in all together nicely.

Wish I had an instrumental version...oh well...

ULTRAVIOLET:

(orgeron)

Probably the best of our first batch of songs circa 82/early '83. This is a re-recorded version, as we had already contributed an earlier one to the "QUAKE" sampler LP. In the end it was left off the record...not quite sure why...maybe because it was pretty old by the time the ep was released...

FORWARD FROM HELL:

(orgeron)

Another from this time, also re-done...the first version was used on a cable tv show, long lost in time. One of a handful of songs I brought with me from my last band, Passion Kick. Lyrically, all Catholic guilt, a popular topic of the day, and musically, sounds like equal parts New Order & Simple Minds(early on, FTB were much more of a post-punk band...the darker elements were there, but took center stage around '83)

Good song.

TOWERS OPEN FIRE:
(orgeron)

Title cribbed from Mr Burroughs...always required reading at my house...darkly playful lyrics mixing Will S in to make a point. Good dynamics, something we were always pretty aware of, and nice movement...all in 2 chords! This one was recorded by Tom "Sourpuss" Mallon, for the tv show & tarted up a little later by Matt Wallace. Another fave that I still pull out every now and then at solo shows.

SOUNDTRACK:
(orgeron)

Newly written & recorded for the ep, this one sounds kinda "positive-punk" w/ red indian/cowboy imagery. The only "political" song I ever wrote for FTB & written specifically for Paulette to sing lead, we rarely ever played it live. Pretty rousing stuff but the mix just sounds odd to me....nice drumming!

CINEMA BLUE:
(rees-denis/orgeron)

Written right before Black Box, this one flexes those blues/Birthday Party/Gun Club muscles a bit. Nice violin overdub by Lucie....too bad about the lyrics & totally over-the-top vocal histrionics. A version w/ a different(better?) vocal exists....maybe a free download or something in the future?

TUNNELDIGGER:
(fade to black)

A good example of our live sound throughout '83...fast, noisy & on the verge of sonic chaos. This one was a show-stopper at the time & showcases P & me on our own take of the Excene/John Doe "harmonies". We were always being compared to X & The DOORS...OK by me! We did another one like this called Madhouse at the time, but never wrote this way again.

EASTER:
(Rees/orgeron)

Our first real "epic" song, both in length & execution. We realized we could stretch the arrangements out a bit live, and from this point on, that's exactly what we did. I think this one started life as a Jeff bass riff & Paulette keyboard melody....I stuck on some lyrics & the end bit & we all arranged it in rehearsals...didn't work 100 % live & the lyrics were messed with over time, but this is a pretty decent version. Recorded for the proposed "Live At Graffiti" lp...unfortunately, never released.

TRIPDITCH:
(fade to black)

Another from the "Graffiti Sessions"...Paulette on 2nd bass...this one kicks! Written in rehearsals, we played it quite a lot thru '84 & up to our very last show...another one with a flexible arrangement & this time, totally improvised lyrics(something I never did again for an entire song) Again...great drumming by Gil pulls it all together.

DEEPER FIX:
(orgeron)

One of 2 songs included here, actually written about someone...lyrically, all true, and perversely, I loved singing it as well! Continuing, roughly, in the vein(pun intended!) of Cinema Blue's dark blues, I wrote this one during a very prolific period, that also included The Monochrome Days & Red Mirror/Black Fire, as well as Death Closet, Guardian & Torso(not included here). "Is this all there is? I need a deeper fix" summed it all up nicely.

THE MONOCHROME DAYS:
(orgeron)

My "apocalypse" song...I got to flex those 60's garage/psych muscles, which was really where I wanted to take the band in the future...but that's another story. The last fast song we wrote or played...from here on, songs got much slower....and longer

EROTICA:
(rees-denis/orgeron)

Paulette wrote this slow-burner & I added appropriate trippy lyrics & arrangement...audiences would sway like haitian zombies to this one...odd the 1st time, but it caught on. Lyrics got changed a bit by the end & may have even been called "The Deeper The Cut" if memory serves(erratically). Another fave.

RED MIRROR/BLACK FIRE:
(orgeron)

The other one written about a real person...and no...still not telling.A monolith of a song and probably my fave song we ever played live. It's stately, it builds & prowls & goes for the slow-burn ending. Yeah! Sadly, the power isn't all apparent as this version, done live in KFJC's studio, as the mix was done on-the-fly, at best.

BLACK JUJU:
(Alice Cooper.)

The only cover we ever even attempted, this one was usually the closer or encore....good version of a great song.

WHIRLPOOL:
(orgeron)

This one comes from the very last months of the band, with ex-Wipers/Napalm Beach drummer Sam Henry taking over after Gil left. Good drummer & sweet guy, but the end was near for me too, after Gil was gone.

I really love this song, but we don't have a decent live version...this is a rehearsal...it only got better...trust me.

DEAD OF NIGHT:
(orgeron)

A demo of the other new song added to the set at the final shows...all instruments, except a bit of guitar,

by me. We changed the arrangement significantly when we played it live & extended it to twice the length...big & scary!

Set Lists

DEBUT SHOW HALLOWEEN '82 CHINA WAGON, SACRAMENTO
BEATING HEARTS (never played again)
SEE-THRU ME
FLAGRENT OBSESSION
PARADE
GONE
I WALK ALONE
BODY FRICTION (I had been playing some version of this in other bands since '79)
TOWERS OPEN FIRE
TWINTIME
MADHOUSE
(ENCORE)
SEE-THRU ME (we ran out of songs)
- Not bad for a 1st show...everything a little fast due to nerves...but a packed house seemed to love us!

MABUHAY GARDENS 12-6-82
DARKER BED (re-adapted from an old Passion Kick song I wrote)
TWINTIME
SEE-THRU ME
BODY FRICTION
PARADE
FLAGRENT OBSESSION
ULTRAVIOLET (1ST TIME PLAYED)
ANIMAL TENSION
MADHOUSE
- in the early days, FTB & Bryan Gregory's Beast were the only bands playing "dark" music in the city...the audience slowly built up through '83.

ON BROADWAY 12-21-82
TOWERS OPEN FIRE
DARKER BED
BODY FRICTION (very interesting version w/ P's synth hissing like a cobra)

PARADE
FLAGRENT OBSESSION
TWINTIME
ULTRAVIOLET
ANIMAL TENSION
MADHOUSE

HARRY'S, SACRAMENTO 12-31-82

BODY FRICTION
TWINTIME
PARADE
FLAGRENT OBSESSION
I WALK ALONE
ULTRAVIOLET
ANIMAL TENSION
MADHOUSE

- my memory of this show was how very different it is to play in the wilderness...on New Year's Eve...in a one-horse town.1 guy & a dog in the audience...chilly short set.

We played quite a lot throughout '83 & '84...these setlists only reflect the shows that were recorded in some fashion....

THE STUD 4-17-83

EARLY SET:
FORWARD FROM HELL
BODY FRICTION
DARKER BED
COMEDY IN BLACK (P & J's ode to their faves...The Stranglers)
PARADE
TOWERS OPEN FIRE
JUNK FOR BLOOD
MADHOUSE

LATE SET:

I WALK ALONE
TWINTIME
PULL THE TRIGGER BOY (Re-worked from an old punk song I wrote in '78...never played again)
ULTRAVIOLET
ANIMAL TENSION
JUNK FOR BLOOD
TUNNELDIGGER (debut of what would be our show-stopper for the next year)
FORWARD FROM HELL
- sometime between the end of '82 and here, we got lots better. This is a pretty wonderful show from beginning to end w/ a few new songs added & a tighter sound...good audience as well...gay bars were cool back then.

OLD WALDORF 6-2-83 SUPPORTING THE DAMNED
ONLY 2ND HALF OF THE SET:
JUNK FOR BLOOD
DEATH CLOSET
ULTRAVIOLET
FORWARD FROM HELL
TUNNELDIGGER
- board tape of a good swaggering show....too bad there's not the whole thing

RUTHIE'S, OAKLAND 12-3-83 SUPPORTING SEX GANG CHILDREN.
PARADE
DEATH CLOSET
RED MIRROR/BLACK FIRE (early version played much faster & shorter)
SOUNDTRACK (P would always have 1 song to sing in the set...previously - Gone, Flagrant Obsession & Junk For Blood....debut of the latest "P" song)
THE COW (by far the oddest song I ever wrote...rarely played & quickly dropped)
SLEEP ON TRIAL (one too many spins of the Cure's Primary led to this...never played again)
DARKER BED (new slower & better arrangement...but alas, it was soon dropped too)
JUNK FOR BLOOD
ULTRAVIOLET
TUNNELDIGGER
- very average performance to a very lame audience...I hated all those 2nd & 3rd division goth bands)

BERKELEY SQUARE 2-29-84
BLACK BOX(1st time played)
GUARDIAN
FORWARD FROM HELL
ANIMAL TENSION (re-arranged & speeded up)
ULTRAVIOLET
DARKER BED
VENDETTA
DEATH CLOSET
PARADE
SOUNDTRACK

TORSO
BLACK JUJU (also the debut of this one)
- Berkeley Square shows were always good...this is
either supporting Rain Parade or Gun Club (where
Jeffrey Lee was running around backstage screaming
"where's my morphine?" Lots of new songs added & others
re-arranged...a very creative period.

181 CLUB EARLY '84?

BLACK JUJU
THE MONOCHROME DAYS
TOWERS OPEN FIRE
JUNK FOR BLOOD
ULTRAVIOLET
DEEP FIX
EASTER
CINEMA BLUE
FORWARD FROM HELL
TORSO
TUNNELDIGGER

- more new songs added...but wasted on the chatty
trannies in this
dump....a truly malevolent set was played in
response...what was I
saying about gay bars?

GRAFFITI MID-'84

EARLY SET:
TOWERS OPEN FIRE
JUNK FOR BLOOD (slow 'n sexy version)
GUARDIAN
THE MONOCHROME DAYS
EASTER
CINEMA BLUE
FORWARD FROM HELL
BLACK BOX

LATE SET:
BLACK JUJU
VENDETTA
DEATH CLOSET
SOUNDTRACK
DEEP FIX
ANIMAL TENSION
TORSO

- big headlining night at a club that we would pretty much come to own thru the rest of '84....great times & great shows.

BERKELEY SQUARE 7-3-84 SEE OTHER b2 SHOW FOR SUPPORT
BLACK BOX
BLACK JUJU
THE MONOCHROME DAYS
TOWERS OPEN FIRE
EASTER
DEEP FIX
CINEMA BLUE
TORSO
ANIMAL TENSION

BLIND ADELAIDE (debut of a very different kind of song for us....I was listening to lots of Neil Young's On The Beach & this is what came of it...not sure it ever worked 100% live & never got to record it)- probably the single show I would play to someone who never heard us...smoldering psychedelic versions of Towers, Monochrome & Black Box...Cinema Blue loses the vocal histrionics...best show on file.

GRAFITTI 8-18-84 UNRELEASED LIVE LP SESSIONS
BLACK BOX
BLACK JUJU
VENDETTA
THE MONOCHROME DAYS
TOWERS OPEN FIRE
DEEP FIX
TORSO
LABOR OF LUST (aka EROTICA)
JUNK FOR BLOOD
EASTER
CINEMA BLUE
TRIPDITCH

RED MIRROR/BLACK FIRE (re-tooled big heavy version)
- recorded for a proposed live LP that never got off
the ground.. some good versions of songs...longest
single set we ever played I'd imagine)

KFJC-FM, MOUNTAIN VIEW 10-30-84

BLACK BOX

THE MONOCHROME DAYS

TOWERS OPEN FIRE

CINEMA BLUE

DEEP FIX

EROTICA

- INTERVIEW -

RED MIRROR/BLACK FIRE

EASTER

BLACK JUJU

BLIND ADELAIDE

- surprisingly well played given the fact that Gil
would be playing his last show the next day AND I was
coming down with what would turn into a bad case of
laryngitis. Too bad the interviewer was a smart ass &
the mix was done on-the-fly & out over the
airwaves...the last half was really good tho' so I
guess I can't complain too loudly.

WOLFGANG'S HALLOWEEN '84 SUPPORTING THE MUTANTS

(GIL'S LAST SHOW)

BLACK BOX

THE MONOCHROME DAYS

TOWERS OPEN FIRE

CINEMA BLUE

DEEP FIX

EROTICA

RED MIRROR/BLACK FIRE

BLACK JUJU

Sad day & one which would bring about the end of the
band...tight set played well but my voice was reduced
to a croak(very Fields of the Nefilim or whatever)
and...oh yeah....it was sad.

THE STONE 12-6-84 1ST SHOW W/ NEW DRUMMER SAM HENRY

DEAD OF NIGHT

DEEP FIX

THE MONOCHROME DAYS
EROTICA
WHIRLPOOL
EASTER
RED MIRROR/BLACK FIRE
BLACK JUJU

- crappy recording of the debut of our new line-up...2
really good new songs added...played fine...but it just
wasn't the same.

MABUHAY GARDENS 12-21-84

DEAD OF NIGHT

DEEP FIX

THE MONOCHROME DAYS

EROTICA

WHIRLPOOL

TRIPDITCH

RED MIRROR/BLACK FIRE

- aborted set due to time, ie, 3 crappy opening bands
played too

long...only fitting end to my involvement with the band
really...the

loss of Gil, the staleness of the "death rock" scene we
were thrown into (god I hated those people) & the
inevitable "musical differences" played out & we all
went on....forward from hell we go.