

ANDY SHERNOFF OF THE DICTATORS MEETS THE ZOMBIE JEW

10.24.2011
05:02 pm

Topics:
Amusing
Belief
Hysteria
Kooks
Music
Punk

Tags:
Andy Shernoff
Are You Ready
To Rapture



Ace musician, producer, founding member of The Dictators and Dangerous Minds' friend Andy Shernoff has a new Youtube video and it's a winner.

Andy shared with DM the history and inspiration behind the making of *Are You Ready To Rapture*:

I grew up in New York City so the only people I knew who believed that Jesus was actually going to fly down from the sky were mentally ill preachers screaming their lungs out in what was then a very seedy Times Square. I had no idea how widespread this revenge fantasy called the Rapture was until a few years ago.

I had the phrase Jewish Zombie rolling through my brain and wanted to incorporate it into a song. I developed a fascination with Christian eschatology and researched it extensively. I wanted everything in the song to accurately represent what these knuckleheads believe. It took a few months and I probably wrote 25 verses until I had three with the right combination of drama, truth and sarcasm.

I felt the best way to communicate the song was with a cartoon. I met Brian Musikoff through a mutual friend and he was the only person considered after I saw his animation for a Patton Oswalt's comedy routine, 'Christmas Shoes'. I liked his visual style and felt he made a great bit even funnier.

Animation is very labor intensive so it took most of 2011 to finish it off. I busted Brian's ass to get it done by October 21st the projected date of the Rapture and we posted it to YouTube on October 20th just in time to catch a little wave of Rapture publicity.

I find it terrifying that many Republican candidates for President not

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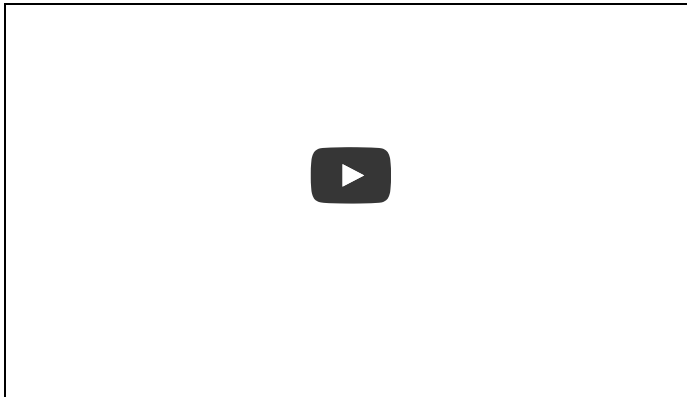
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only believes that Jesus will return to earth in their lifetime, but that the ensuing destruction would be a good thing. They're just so confident that they will be raptured while every person who has not let Jesus into their life will burn in the eternal flames of hell..... It is our patriotic duty as Americans to mock such irrationality.

By the way the song is available as a vinyl 45 from your favorite local record store with an unreleased Joey Ramone track as the B-side”

Are You Ready To Rapture manages to do two things really well at the same time: it makes a timely political statement and it's a terrific rock song. That's hard to pull off and we haven't seen much of it since The Clash and The Sex Pistols. Andy Shernoff, as punk as he ever was, reminds us that the history of rock and roll is also the history of cultural change and subversion - a revolution you can dance to. Nicely done Shernoff!



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Posted by Marc Campbell

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Proto-punk Andy Shernoff asks "Are You Ready to Rapture?" with help from Hoboken animator

Print (http://blog.nj.com/hobokennow_impact/print.html?entry=/2011/10/proto-punk_andy_shernoff_asks.html)

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on October 21, 2011 at 1:05 PM

Radio broadcaster Harold Camping admitted that he was wrong about the world ending back in May, but he's done the math again and this time he's certain that **doomsday will arrive today, October 21.**



Hoboken artist Brian Musikoff animated the satirical video for Andy Shernoff's new single "Are You Ready to Rapture"

(http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2011/10/end_of_the_world_again.html) Appropriately, **Andy Shernoff** – founding member of punk rock godfathers the Dictators and a renowned producer, songwriter, and entertainer – has released a song for the occasion; his new single is entitled "Are You Ready to Rapture?" and you can sample it for free – along with the hilarious accompanying animation by **Hoboken** cartoon artist **Brian Musikoff** – on YouTube.

Musikoff - a longtime Hoboken resident, bartender, musician, and cartoonist - is no stranger to **Hoboken Now:**

(http://www.nj.com/hobokennow/index.ssf/2011/06/behind_a_bar_or_on_a_stage_hob.html)

"people know him from his comic books or playing in bands, but Brian is a very talented animator as well," said Shernoff. "As soon as I saw his work, I knew he was the right person to do this video."

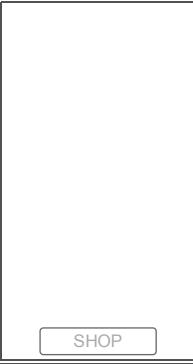
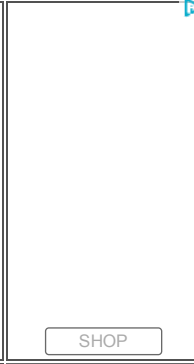
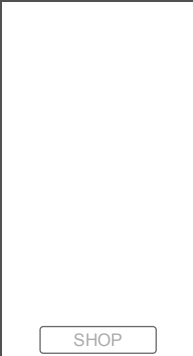

The video for "Are You Ready to Rapture" – which is rated R and "Not Safe For Work," in case you're reading this at your desk, and could be offensive to religious viewers -- features zombified versions of Uncle Sam, Michael Jackson, Joey Ramone, and Jesus, rising from the dead on Armageddon Day.

"It used to be that there would be these nutjobs standing on a street corner in Times Square screaming about the end of the world, and nobody took them seriously," said Shernoff. "Now we have people with these beliefs featured in the media, and some of them are even running for president. I would never mock somebody's religion, but if it's going to affect public policy, then I have a right to satirize it. And if I can get a good laugh out of it, even better."

The flipside of the "Rapture" 7-inch, "Make Me Tremble," features a guest vocal by Joey Ramone, recorded shortly before he passed away. Shernoff produced and co-wrote several songs on Joey's solo album, "Don't Worry About Me."



Shernoff has been taking potshots at American culture

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(http://www.nj.com/healthfit/index.ssf/2014/08/deadline_looms_for_immigrants_to_clear_up_obamacare_discrepancies.html)



Andy Shernoff, considered one of the founders of New York City punk rock.

since the mid-Seventies, when he and some friends from Queens formed the Dictators, one of New York City's first punk rock bands. Their seminal 1975 album "The Dictators Go Girl Crazy" predated the debut of the Ramones by a year. "It was much easier for rock 'n' roll to be politically incorrect back then," said Shernoff. "We could sing about drugs and girls and being Jewish and nobody took us seriously enough to be offended. Nowadays there are more drugs on Wall Street than

there are at rock shows. The culture has shifted, as it always does. So I just decided to write a song to amuse myself and make a statement at the same time. That's the way I've always written, going back to the Dictators songs that raised some eyebrows like 'Master Race Rock.'"

"Punk rock has won," he added. "When we started, the motto was do it yourself. Today, it's true; anyone can do it. With new technology, you don't need an expensive studio to make a record, you can do it in your bedroom. A lot of people complain about the state of the music business, but I'm really excited about it. Take this single, for instance. I had the choice to do an EP, a CD, or a video. Well, with this video, we can throw it up on Youtube for free and pass it around, and potentially millions of people can see it. You didn't have that kind of opportunity before. I'm really lucky that I've had a career that's lasted this long, and now I can go direct to my audience."

Over the years, Shernoff has produced records for artists like Joey Ramone, D Generation, The Smithereens, and Guided By Voices, among many others, and songs that he's written have been covered by Mary Weiss of the Shangri-La's, Dion DiMucci (of Dion & The Belmonts,) Turbonegro, the Young Fresh Fellows, and many more.

"Today a band gets discovered and they sign what they call a '360 deal' with a record label, which basically means that they get an advance but then they share the income on everything from their songwriting to their merchandise," Shernoff said. "I've always kept the rights to all my publishing, which is what I would recommend to any young artist. I can't live on those royalties alone, but it sure helps pay the bills. And the value of those songs only goes up over time. There's an old saying in show business: The slower it is going up, the slower it will be coming down. Take your time, build your audience, and you can have a long career."

Fans can see Shernoff every Wednesday night at 8 p.m. at the Lakeside Lounge (162 Avenue B, Manhattan), where he is performing a free residency for the indefinite future. "People come, they have a drink, I play some songs and tell some stories about the old days, about CBGB's and Max's Kansas City and what New York City was like in the Seventies," Shernoff explained. "It's very relaxed, very informal, but it's a lot of fun." Fans can purchase the "Are You Ready to Rapture?" 7-inch single at his shows and at www.andyshernoff.com (<http://www.andyshernoff.com/>).

Related article:

'Rapture' video a good one to share on so-called Judgment Day
(http://www.nj.com/hudson/index.ssf/2011/05/rapture_video_a_good_one_to_sh.html)

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Active Discussions



1974: Rare inner sleeve for the Dictators Go Girl Crazy, Andy on right.

Andy Shernoff has had a longer recording career than Howlin' Wolf or Muddy Waters. That in itself is not so remarkable, there are plenty of pediatric rockstars out there who have been around longer. What is remarkable is that he's still great. When was the last time Ray Davies or Pete Townshend wrote a good song? (If you ask me, and you shouldn't cuz I ain't gonna argue about it, I'd say 1970 and '67 receptively).

Andy's last great song was released a couple of weeks ago (Are You Ready To Rapture, see video above, I assume you can order the 45 rpm from his website).

Shernoff, who's career began with might be the greatest (and definitely the funniest) ever fanzine-- *Teenage Wasteland Gazette* (a never published final issue of which has resided in Handsome Dick Manitoba's closet for forty something years), is best known as full time songwriter, bassist and sometimes lead singer for NYC rock'n'roll institution the Dictators, whose 1974 debut *The Dictators Go Girl Crazy* (Epic) remains one of the greatest and most perfect punk rock records ever released. He shepherded the Dictators through three more fine LP's-- *Manifest Destiny* (Asylum, 1977), *Blood Brothers* (Asylum, 1978) and *D.F.F. D.* (Dictators Multi-Media, 2002), and don't forget Norton Records' 2009 release *Everyday's Saturday* that features their original demo tape and many incredible studio outtakes including lost tunes like Fireman's Friend and Backseat Boogie (a project I think I instigated when I lent Billy Miller two CD's worth of un-issued Dictators stuff, still in the vault are tunes like Too Much

DM Dangerous Minds
44 minutes ago

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2 days ago

E North Fork Sound
3 days ago

E White Trash Soul
3 days ago

E Don't Ask Me I Don't Know
3 days ago

Animals Being Dicks
5 days ago

E Kogar's Jungle Juice

Fun and Tits To You as well as a killer Interstellar Overdrive). Andy was also the guiding light behind Dictators spin-off Manitoba's Wild Kingdom, fronted the Bel-airs and the Master Plan (with the Fleshtones' Keith Streng), co-wrote tunes with Joey Ramone (for both the Ramones and Joey's solo album), produced a bunch of bands, and was involved in dozens of other projects that slip my mind at the moment (including a second career as a punk sommelier).

I bring this up to you because I happened to wander into my own bar (Lakeside Lounge, 162 Ave B., NYC) two Wednesdays in a row (a rare occurrence these days, I assure you) where Andy currently holds court at 7 PM with his acoustic review, and I have to say, it's the best hour of live entertainment I've seen in eons. The set changes weekly, and Shernoff has an incredibly deep catalog of great tunes to pick from, but I think last week's show which opened with an acoustic reading of Master Race Rock and included Dictators classics' Baby Let's Twist, and Hey Boys, and a beautiful version of Joey Ramone's Don't Think About It was as perfect a set as I've ever seen. In between tunes Shernoff talks about his life and times in rock'n'roll, some of these stories are hilarious (the first Dictators shows), some are touching (the final days of Joey Ramone), some are both (the David Roter story). With free admission and half priced drinks, you really can't possibly go wrong. Andy will also be appearing at the Norton Records 25th Anniversary shindig in November, I'm not sure which night but all four are sold out, so you're either all ready going or you ain't. Andy Shernoff may actually outlive rock'n'roll (or did that already happen?), but he's one of the last of the breed, and there are too few left to ignore him.

POSTED BY THE HOUND AT 3:02 PM 

LABELS: ANDY SHERNOFF, THE DICTATORS

12 COMMENTS:



Joe Bonomo said...

Great, Hound. Andy needs more people stating under-said obvious: that Andy's one of the best rock & roll songwriters around.

OCTOBER 30, 2011 AT 3:12 PM

Anonymous said...

The song he wrote for the A-Bone, "Shallow Grave", is a classic.

OCTOBER 30, 2011 AT 3:24 PM

6 days ago



Lethal Dose

6 days ago



Anorak Thing

6 days ago

The Vintage Song of the Day!

6 days ago



If Charlie Parker Was a Gunslinger, There'd Be a Whole Lot of Dead Copycats

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2 weeks ago



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J.D. King

2 weeks ago



Black Cracker Online

2 weeks ago



PARADISE OF GARAGE COMPS!

3 weeks ago



CELLULOID SLAMMER

3 weeks ago



holy ghost

4 weeks ago



Werner Herzog Film

4 weeks ago



NORTONVILLE

4 weeks ago



Berlin Beatet Bestes

1 month ago



junk shop juke box

1 month ago

Wine Club Guide

2 months ago



kicksville 66

3 months ago



J. D. King said...

"...1974 debut The Dictators Go Girl Crazy (Epic) remains one of the greatest and most perfect punk rock records ever released."

Amen. Almost too perfect! A lotta energy.

NOVEMBER 1, 2011 AT 8:27 AM

e Robert Cook said...

I remember reading a story about the Dictators in CIRCUS magazine back in 1974 (I'm going by your date), and I special ordered their album from my local mall record store. It was all I had hoped for, and I have been a fan ever since. The Dictators played Jacksonville sometime in the later 70s as openers for BE BOP DELUXE, but I missed them, as I had to work that night. I always wondered what they would have thought at a (presumably) lone voice calling for "Two Tub Man" or "Master Race Rock" in the outlands of northeast Florida.

I did see them later after I'd moved to NYC, at the Ritz in the 80s, and they were killer.

A few years back I was standing on line at Cinema Village to see one of only four midnight showings of the MC5 movie, and I became aware that the guy standing behind me was Andy Shernoff. I didn't say anything to him, being disinclined to intrude on the privacy of celebrities just living their lives, (no matter how modest their "fame").

NOVEMBER 2, 2011 AT 11:08 PM



The Hound said...

"The Dictators played Jacksonville sometime in the later 70s as openers for BE BOP DELUXE, but I missed them, as I had to work that night."

I saw the same bill in Miami in the winter of '77. The Dics were great as always, my favorite part was the Glickman family, relatives of then bass player Mark "The Animal" Mendoza (later of Twister Sister) in the dressing room.

NOVEMBER 3, 2011 AT 10:40 AM

e Robert Cook said...



Another Nickel In The Machine

3 months ago



Blaxploitation Jive

3 months ago



A Heartful Of Napalm

3 months ago

Ponderosa Stomp

4 months ago



t.tex's hexes

6 months ago

Lesbians Who Look Like Justin Bieber

6 months ago



boogie woogie flu

7 months ago



It's psychedelic baby, that's what it's all about

10 months ago



It's all the streets you crossed not so long ago

11 months ago



The Singing Bones

11 months ago

You Fill Me With Inertia

11 months ago

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1 year ago

How did the Miami audience react to the Dictators? I assume the Jacksonville audience would have been indifferent or hostile--given that the Dictators would have been totally unknown to them--but perhaps the band managed to win the audience over to them. (But then, who is BE BOP DELUXE's audience, anyway?)

NOVEMBER 4, 2011 AT 11:38 AM

sal c. said...

Robert, where in Jacksonville did you see them? I've been working on a gig-ography for the Dics for a while now, and any bit of info helps.

NOVEMBER 16, 2011 AT 8:55 AM

 Robert Cook said...

Sal C.

I didn't see them, I had to work that night.

They played at the Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Coliseum, (demolished in 2003, it has been replaced by the Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville_Coliseum

I can't tell exactly when it was, but the Hound said above he saw the same bill--Dictators opening for Be Bop Deluxe--in Miami in the Fall of 1977. That sounds about right to me.

NOVEMBER 16, 2011 AT 11:27 PM



Joe Bonomo said...


Andy's two sets at Norton 25 were great. I would've liked to have heard him in the main room.


NOVEMBER 17, 2011 AT 10:16 AM

Anonymous said...

Jim just wanted to say thanks for such a great read oh these many years. Can certainly understand you taking a break and look forward to more of your muse when the urge strikes. Have a Happy Holiday to you and the lovely Fang

NOVEMBER 21, 2011 AT 10:33 AM


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2 years ago

 The Slop
2 years ago

 the imperial dogs
2 years ago

 RECORD FIEND
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avidmartinet said...

andy's one of the true architects of the late 70's wave of punk rock. he's the goods.

NOVEMBER 21, 2011 AT 7:06 PM

Buy Kamagra said...

Thanks for taking the time to discuss this, I feel strongly about information and love learning more on this. If possible, as you gain expertise, It is extremely helpful for me. would you mind updating your blog with more information.

JANUARY 19, 2012 AT 3:34 AM

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James Williamson

Welcome to the I-94 Bar , can
we pour you a drink?

~ Dolphins Of Hollywood ~

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Andy Shernoff