

BAD BRAINS

BY: BOZ

BAAAAADD BRAINS. With a name like that how can you go wrong? Originally from D.C. the Bad Brains started around 3 1/2 years ago playing fusion jazz. Disgusted with the "sell-outs" in that scene, they've since changed their musical direction. Today they play a mixture of intense hardcore and reggae. They are also one of the main uniting forces behind the N.Y./D.C. hardcore scene. They're constantly breaking new ground. Punk happens to attract for the most part, white performers and audiences, however the Bad Brains are black. They consist of H.R., vocals; Gary (AKA Dr. Know), guitar; Darryl, bass; and Earl, drums. The following interview was conducted with Gary over the phone back in November. Sorry if there's not more to it but after we got started we got sidetracked discussing their upcoming tour in January and the possibility of playing Florida. I lost it totally just thinking about the chance of seeing them here. Florida? Nothing like this has ever happened here before.

SR: I was wondering if you could tell us about the cassette tape you have coming out.

GARY: It's coming out on Reachout International and right now the release date is set for January 15 and it will be an album length tape.

SR: Is it all live stuff?

GARY: What we are probably gonna do is do a few live cuts, a few studio cuts, and a little of both. What we are gonna try to do is give an overall presentation of the band. So it will be some live stuff, some rock, cause we play rock and reggae. Some rock, some reggae, some live, some studio.

SR: How's the response been to the rerelease of your single?

GARY: It's gone! The first pressing is sold out so if anyone wants to hear it probably the only way is "Let Them Eat Jellybeans".

SR: Do you feel that the single was representative of your sound?

GARY: Definetly. Definetly. Definetly. Even though it was some time ago.... we've gotten faster now but it's like wow cause I heard a tape of us doing it recently and it's like a whole different

speed. I guess we're getting better as time goes along... alot faster. Our music's alot better so I want the tape to get out. Once the tape comes out we're definitely putting out some records on our own label. It will be coming out right after the tape, probably an EP and then an album. We're doing alot of work with the NY scene and like I say we're going to be putting some Bad Brains stuff on The Bad Brains label but we're also going to put some other bands on our label.

SR: Anyone in particular?

GARY: Well The Reagan Youth and a band called... let's see which one is definite right now... OK The Mob and a group called Even Worse. Have you read the last issue of Sounds? Most of those bands are coming out on our own label.

SR: Do you have any distribution deals yet?

GARY: We haven't worked out anything yet. It's really a bad thing all around cause if you don't have money the bands can't get with a record company. The audience response is there it's just that the record companies aren't doing it. We're having to do our own thing. The bands have to stay together. As a group we can all do it and that's what we are really stressing and **striving** for. Not just in New York cause we're from D.C. originally and we're trying to get some of those bands involved too.

SR: Are you currently relocating in New York?

GARY: Well presently yeah. We are here for indefinitely. It's where we are gonna set up our home base business wise. Business is just getting started... we're gonna be here for awhile.

SR: How does the scene in New York compare to D.C.?

GARY: Both scenes are real healthy, it's just more places to play in New York. What we're trying to do is when we go to D.C. is take a New York band down there and when we play New York we try to get a D.C. band up here cause we got a little prestige now. We can kind of get who we want sometimes. Otherwise these bands wouldn't even get enough chance to get this much exposure in these big clubs. So that's pretty much what's happening now.

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