

**the // skyway \\**  
*the replacements mailing list*

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## ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN

Apologies for why this has taken a while to come out. It's been an overly exciting time since the last issue came out at the end of 2019: being a principal at an international school during a pandemic, losing a parent and a sibling, moving countries. (Most Replacements fans are now the phase where life provides enough excitement without having to hang out on Saturday and look for it.)

Since the last time one of these came out, if you haven't already heard the deluxe reissues of *Pleased to Meet Me* and *Sorry Ma, Forgot to Take Out the Trash*, they were worth waiting decades for. Thanks to Bob Mehr and Rhino Records, as these are the things that have been helping keep the rock since shows have been few and far between the last 21 months.



One person who has been busy is **Tommy Stinson**, who has been on tour as much as possible in the last five years whether solo, as Bash & Pop, or as the duo with Chip Roberts as Cowboys in the Campfire.

**Matt Wake** of AL.com interviewed Tommy last month about what he has been up to:

**You mentioned Paul and Slim, I was curious when was the last time you talked to Paul Westerberg and what did you guys chat about?**

You know, I haven't actually spoken to Paul since we did our last reunion show together (in 2015). We kind of parted company at that last show, and both went on our own merry way to do whatever we're going to deal with life and all that. And it really doesn't mean anything. We've gone major periods of time where we haven't spoken each other, just doing our own different s---, you know?

## What's next for you as a solo artist?

Yeah, the next thing I got coming out's gonna be this Cowboys in the Campfire record that I've been working for a while. And that's my writing partner friend, Chip Roberts, and I. We're a duo. The record's got a little bass and drums on it. John Doe from X played a little on it and did a little background vocal on it. We just kind of called a lot of our friends to help us fill out the songs, but a lot of it's just, you know, him and I kind of playing rock & roll as a duo. Some of it comes off probably sounding a little country-ish. But the next thing that I put out will be that. And then who knows. I think somewhere down the road, I'll probably make another Bash & Pop record, because I like playing with all those guys too, when I did the band thing.

[https://www.al.com/life/2021/12/tommy-stinson-talks-the-replacements-guns-n-roses-solo-tour.html?fbclid=IwAR3tgpg3XfPN6KSJ7urAyd8luyUHUpDZalcBXPjN\\_lai9JfsgXgpE-vob0Y](https://www.al.com/life/2021/12/tommy-stinson-talks-the-replacements-guns-n-roses-solo-tour.html?fbclid=IwAR3tgpg3XfPN6KSJ7urAyd8luyUHUpDZalcBXPjN_lai9JfsgXgpE-vob0Y)

Tommy, the man who Jim Dickenson said, “is rock n’ roll”. Heralded as having possibly made the best post-‘Mats solo album with *Friday Night is Killing Me*, he is the one Replacement still releasing music to this day. He also has been one of the most accessible to fans: playing in their houses, playing pool, and taking photos with them.

If you have never heard his duo with his ex-uncle in law Chip Roberts, it is remarkable and better than would ever hope to expect. (If you have never seen it, you can hear how great they are at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjFEy6aen28>. See his January 2022 tour dates of the Southeast US at <https://www.tommystinson.com/new-dates-added/>.)

## Most of this issue is of photos people have taken with Tommy Stinson from 1987-2021.

When first putting this together, I thought it'd be a flipbook of dozens of identical candid photographs of a sweaty, post-performance rocker with dazed fans. Putting them together, one by one, it didn't feel that way. Instead, it began to take on a life of its own.

It has been a great way to end 2021, looking at photo after photo of people with adoration and happiness on their faces, showing the exhilaration of hearing songs they loved for years, or just being able to say thanks to the one who played bass in their favorite band.

I had no idea this would turn out so well. I hope looking through these shots, after two years of reduced human contact to whatever extent, that you feel the same.

m@.

## PICTURES OF YOU AND TOMMY STINSON



*Bill Holdship*

*April 1987*

*San Juan Capistrano, California*

“Backstage at the Coach House in San Juan Capistrano. It was the first unofficial practice show of the *Pleased to Meet Me* tour which officially opened a month or two later at the Variety Arts Center in Los Angeles.”

*(from Bill Holdship’s personal Facebook page)*





*Donna Farmer*  
*1987*  
*Birmingham, Alabama*

"I am the one avoiding eye contact with the lens."



*Jon Taylor  
Los Angeles, California  
1996*

"I was producing a Discovery channel show on the newfangled 'internet' that all the kids were crazy about. For a segment on the mind-bending prospect that music would soon be broadcast across the web, my friend, colleague, and fellow Mats fan Scott Corburn and I decided to use a Perfect show as the focus of a live broadcast.

The top row is Perfect, the bottom row is me, Scott Corburn and Internet Radio pioneer Jonathan Troen."



*Darren Snyder*  
*2004-5*





*Jac Gruenwald  
circa 2004-5  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

“Before the show I was at the urinal. Tommy pulls up next to me. We had quite a conversation. The picture is after the show. I'm loaded, Tommy not -- the polar opposite of our previous encounters.”



*Jon Phillip  
May 1, 2012  
Media, Pennsylvania*

"Drinks after band practice. Played World Cafe in Philly the next morning."





*Paul Fries  
July 20, 2014  
Louisville, Kentucky*



*Chris Matthes  
July 23, 2014  
Dewey Beach, Delaware*





*Jay Russell*  
*October 5, 2014*  
*Austin, Texas*

"This is from the reunion show at Austin City Limits. My friend said he saw Tommy by the VIP section so I ran over 1/4 of a mile in about 2 minutes while dodging people. Told him I had been to 6 of the reunion shows and I brought a baseball from the Minnesota show in hopes having him and Paul sign one. He was sincerely taken a back a bit and was so appreciative. He signed the ball, grabbed the other one and took it back for Paul to sign. He stuck his head out of the trailer and waved. I later hired Bash and Pop to play at our SXSW party in 2017. I have the most epic pic of Tommy curled up in a ball sleeping on my floor. 5 minutes later he turned on and was playing like... murder."



*Bill Holdship  
May 3, 2015  
Detroit, Michigan*

“I had a plane ticket to fly to Austin, Texas to catch the Replacements' reunion show there at a festival and to interview Paul & Tommy on video for a DVD that was being planned at that time. Paul's manager and good guy Darren Hill had contacted me the week before to set it up. I wanted to do it so bad. And it was probably wishful thinking on my part to think that I could. My driver actually got me all the way to Metro Airport in Detroit that Friday morning – but I realized and ultimately faced the fact that I was too sick, too crippled and in no shape to get on a plane and travel to Texas. It absolutely broke my heart. My biggest fear was that they were all going to be mad at me for blowing it. But Darren, being the managerial problem solver that he is, came up with a solution and I interviewed the two of them the next afternoon via Skype. It wasn't the same as being able to go to Austin – I still want to cry when I think about it – but it was still pretty cool. I will always remember them telling me at the beginning of the interview that they had

decided that fellow CREEM editor and Mats fan John R. Kordosh and I had "been a bad influence" on them back in the day – imagine being a "bad influence" on the Replacements! -- but I should note that they both had big grins on their face when they were telling me that.

The other thing that I will always remember as being so endearing was that near the end of the interview, I was giving them a sob story about how they had finally reunited; all of my friends were going to and raving about the shows; the anthems were finally being played as the anthems that they always were in front of adoring crowds – and I was too sick and too crippled to see any of the shows. And Paul said: "Don't worry, Bill. We'll play Detroit. We'll definitely be coming to Detroit." Now I don't know if this had been part of the plan or not. This was a period in time, due to severe economic problems, that almost no major tours were hitting Detroit. But the following spring, in May, sure enough, the Mats played the Motor City – the Fillmore, to be exact – and Darren got me set up in the handicapped section. There was even an escort at the door to greet me and take me to my seat. So never let it be said that Paul Westerberg isn't a man of his word. In fact, it ended up being one of the last shows of the tour because the following two had to be canceled, and Paul played it with a high fever and the beginning stages of pneumonia. Darren actually phoned me the next day to tell me that they were stuck in Detroit due to the diagnosis.

The interview was intended to be included as part of a planned DVD of the homecoming stadium reunion show in Minneapolis, which some now label as "legendary." Obviously, the DVD never got released. I don't know what happened but I sure wish they would still release it and I think most fans would probably agree. If not, maybe someday I'll get around to transcribing the damn thing – 'the great lost Replacements interview' – and find a home for it. By the way, have I ever mentioned how much I love the Replacements?"

*(from Bill Holdship's personal Facebook page)*





*Matthew Hamilton  
May 9, 2015  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*



*Lennart Schaap  
May 30, 2015  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands*





*Matthew Hamilton  
June 4, 2016  
Hudson, New York*



*Mike O'Neil  
August 3, 2016  
St. Louis, MO*



*Debbie O'Neil  
August 4, 2016  
St. Louis, MO*





*Alex Otto*  
*August 7, 2016*  
*Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

"I took my nephew Alex who was studying in Milwaukee to see Tommy. A fun night. At the end of show everyone was leaving and I saw Tommy go back on stage to collect some stuff. I decided to drag my nephew up to the stage to ask Tommy if he would take a picture with my nephew. He was super nice and even suggested that I take one with him as well. Made my nephew's night. Oh, and mine as well. – Joe Otto"



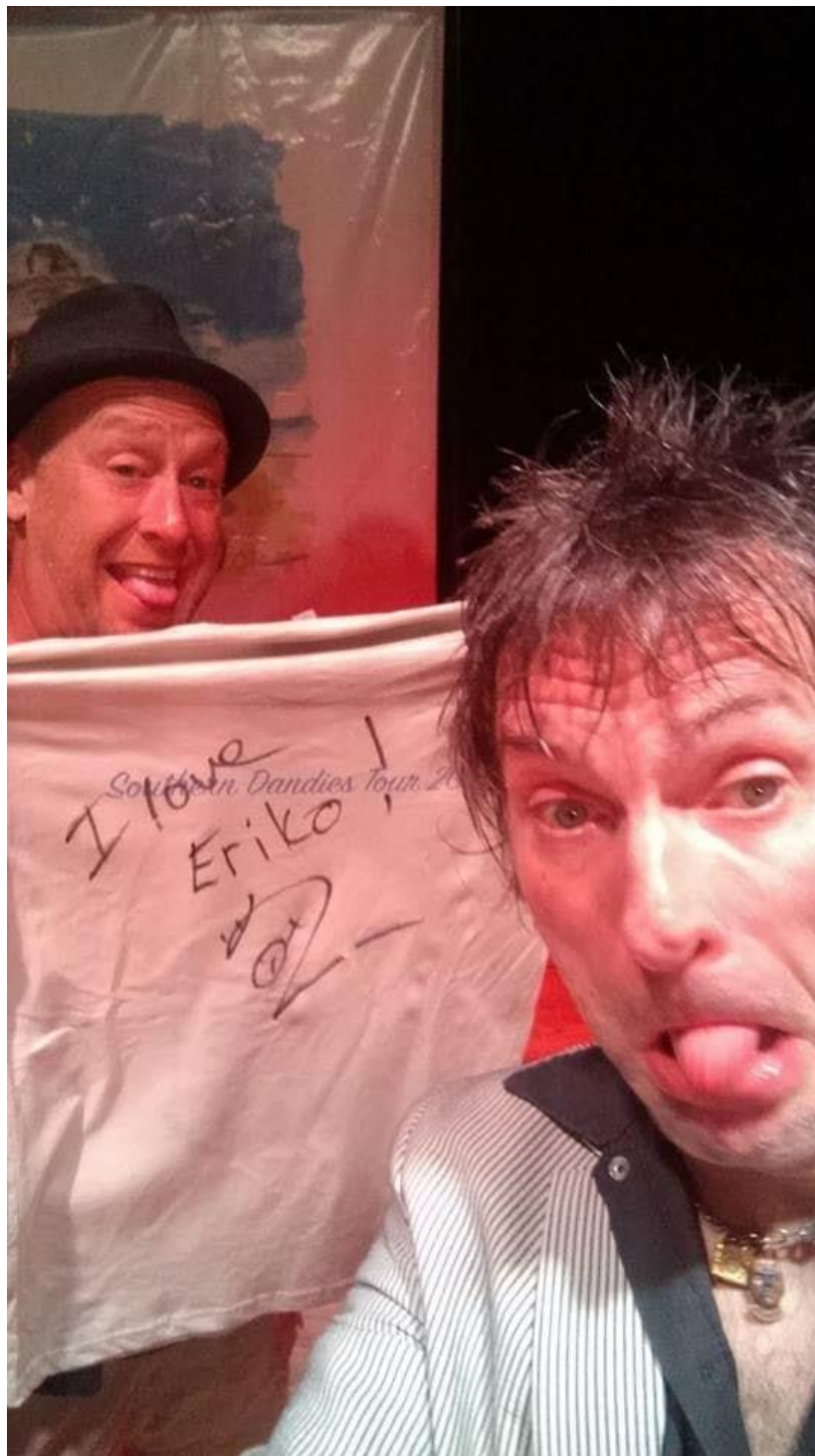


*Robb Earp and Ralph Bryant  
August 15, 2016  
Cedar Falls, Iowa*



*Matt Kelley  
August 16, 2016  
Fort Wayne, Indiana*

"After Tommy and Chip played the B-Side at One Lucky Guitar. No story to tell; just general disbelief it was happening."

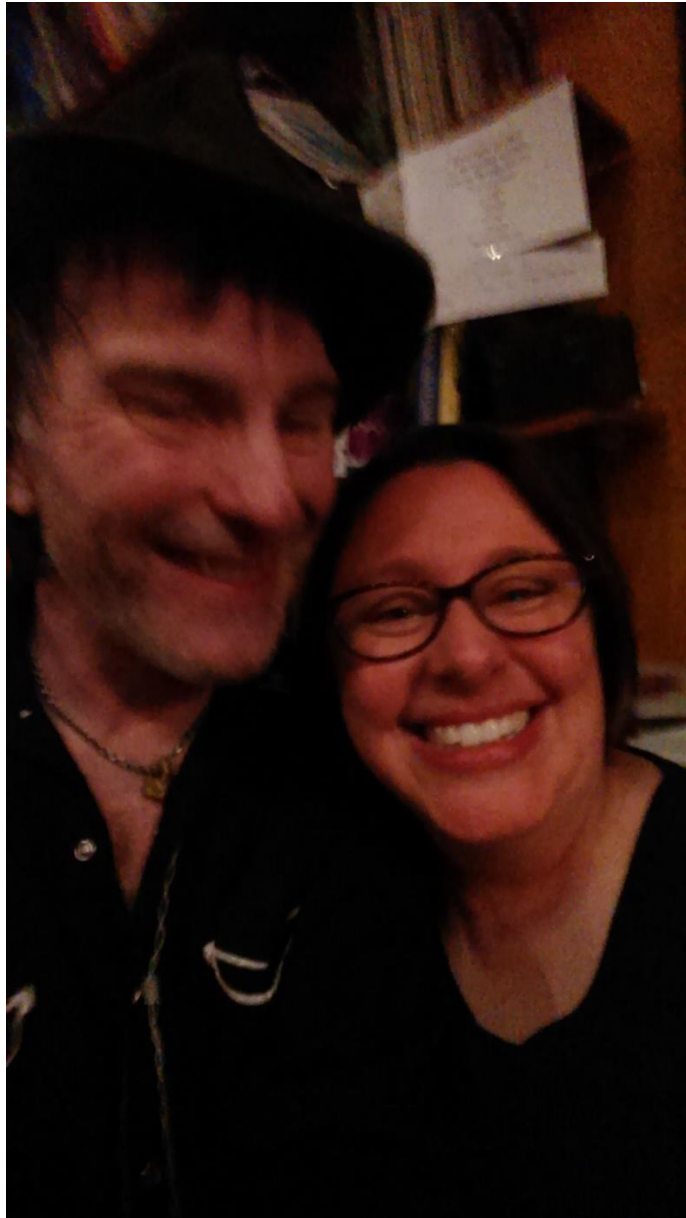


*Kip Jekel*  
*August 18, 2016*  
*Kalamazoo, Michigan*





*Elaine Pan  
October 26, 2016  
Seattle, Washington*



*Rachel Gue Roe  
October 28, 2016  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota*

"I got my picture taken with Tommy after a Cowboys in the Campfire show in Sioux Falls, the one in the tattoo parlor (Vishnu Bunny). He was getting tatted up when I arrived, and after the show, I waited till most of the fanboys cleared out, and asked if I could just get a picture with him. He wanted to swap faces, but my phone at the time sucked, so I told him no."





*Carolyn Cone  
October 30, 2016  
Minneapolis, Minnesota*



*Leonard Weindorfer  
October 19, 2016  
Oakland, California*



*Maureen O'Brien  
October 27, 2016  
Rapid City, South Dakota*

"I met Tommy at The Cave in Rapid City, South Dakota for a Cowboys in the Campfire show. I told him about the radio show I did at the time and he helped me record a promo for it."





*Jon Clifford  
October 28, 2016  
Minneapolis, Minnesota*



*Ketut Juan Mak*  
*January 12, 2017*  
*Minneapolis, Minnesota*

"From the Bash and Pop *Anything Can Happen* release party at First Ave. / 7<sup>th</sup> Street Entry. Talked with Tommy about us playing pool at the CC Club back in the 80s."





*Ken Sumka*  
*January 13, 2017*  
*Milwaukee, Wisconsin*





*Scott Molenhouse  
January 14, 2017  
Chicago, Illinois*

“Cobra Lounge Chicago about 4 years ago. I think this was after show, we bought him shots, he bought us shots, bar had emptied out, talked for a while, Tommy couldn’t have been cooler.”



*Stuart Rosenthal  
February 12, 2017  
Red Bank, New Jersey*



*Anthony Merchant (of the [Power Chord Hour](#) podcast)*

*February 18, 2017*

*Gibsonia, Pennsylvania*

“I remember talking to Uncle Sippy afterwards and we both realized he had apparently played guitar for my aunt Natalie for a quick second in the early nineties. Thought that was pretty cool!”





*Vincent Cook*  
*Green Bay, Wisconsin*



*Jamie MacDonald*

*May 20, 2017*

*Washington D.C.*

“Tommy was kinda tired, and at this point probably wishing me and my friends would leave so they could finish loading out. We were the last ones there and stupid drunk and being pretty disruptive. We eventually went to the upstairs bar and got thrown out after some beer went over someone’s head but before that Tommy was pretty cool with me. I told him my daughter was dying to see him but the show was the same night as prom. He said it was cool she went to prom, she could catch him another time.”



*Ben Helm  
July 24, 2017  
Louisville, Kentucky*





*Mike O'Neil*  
*July 25, 2017*  
*St. Louis, Missouri*



*Freddy Caple  
July 27, 2017  
Louisville, KY*

“He and Chip played a set and they stuck around quite some time afterwards answering questions, signing posters/records, and taking photos. The kiss on the cheek was a total surprise and we all got a good laugh over the look on my face! LOL!”



*Mary Stilson  
July 29, 2017  
Buffalo, New York*

Rick Criden: "On my birthday, Tommy and Chip with my wife Mary Stilson at a small gathering at Community Beer Works."





*Adam Yalowich  
September 24, 2017  
Clearwater, Florida*

"This is really more of a photo bomb actually. We went and saw Bash & Pop open for the Psychedelic Furs in a beautiful theater. This photo was after their set during intermission and Tommy was holding court and selling a lot of merch. I bought a band shirt and told Tommy how great the set was and he said thanks. A lot of people wanted to talk to him, so I moved off to the side. My wife had her camera ready assuming I would ask for a photo, but that isn't my thing to interrupt, so she got me in the shot with the thumbs up and my Canada shirt. The guy shaking Tommy's hand actually spoke with him for 3-4 minutes and got several photos. It was a fun night."



*Chad & Lisa Cooley  
September 30, 2017  
Baltimore, Maryland*

“Taken with Bash & Pop playing with the Psychedelic Furs. Tommy & crew blew them off the stage. He was a bit cantankerous that night in the meet and greet/merch section but still a great show and memory. The next day I was having ankle surgery so this was a last blast before going under the knife. Definitely the way to go out!”





*Gordon Gunn  
October 1, 2017  
Red Bank, New Jersey*





*Ed Shanahan  
October 1, 2017  
Red Bank, New Jersey*



*Steve and Robin Andreoli  
October 6, 2017  
Tarrytown, NY*

“Not only was this Tommy's birthday, it was also the day I got my copy of *The Replacements - For Sale: Live at Maxwell's* with the paper dolls. I was just as thrilled to meet and hang out with Steve Selvidge from The Hold Steady, who was the guitarist for the Bash & Pop tour, as I was to see Tommy again. They opened for Psychedelic Furs that night.”



*Chris Howell  
October 20, 2017  
Buffalo, New York*

“Hey! Here's a picture of (L to R) me & my good friend Frank with Tommy at the Dinosaur Bar-B-Que in Buffalo. We drove out from Cleveland and had a blast!”





*Heather Chakiris  
November 11, 2017  
Santa Ana, California*



*Joseph Thum*  
*November 26, 2017*  
*Reno, Nevada*

“Taken at a house in Reno where he played in front of about 30 people during the Cowboys in the Campfire tour.”



*Martin Rose and Nate Williams*  
*November 27, 2017*  
*Sacramento, California*





*Ian J Miller*  
*March 1, 2018*  
*Brooklyn, New York*

“Did he grab your phone and tell you to say ‘One, two, three...YEAH!’? Because that's what he did when I met him!”



*Angi and Rob Pannell  
March 5, 2018  
Richmond, Virginia*

“From the first time we hosted Tommy at our place - Chilton House RVA. It was also the night before my 50th birthday in March of 2018. These photos were taken in our kitchen that night after the show. Fun fact - my first hug as a 50 year old was from Tommy. Rob also likes to tell people I woke up with Tommy on my 50th...which is only true in that he was in our guest room. We love the guy!”



*Mathew Taylor  
March 5, 2018  
Richmond, Virginia*





*Nina Kyle  
March 10, 2018  
Atlanta, GA*



*Jeff Anderson  
March 19, 2018  
San Antonio, Texas*

“Met Tommy at one of his house shows a few years ago. He grabbed my phone and insisted to take the selfie.”



*Rob Hankosky*  
*March 19, 2018*  
*San Antonio TX*

“Me, Will Moore & Tommy. Mar 20, 2018. House show in San Antonio. Had a great talk with him in the kitchen. A pig was in attendance.”







*Jon Phillip  
March 24, 2018  
Franklin, Tennessee*



*Robert Kemp and Laura Henderson*

*June 14, 2018*

*Saint Michaels, Maryland*

*"Tommy married us."*



*Alex MF Bokulich  
August 2018  
Media, Pennsylvania*

“Here's a daytime whiskey selfie. This was just drunk on the street between the bar his show was at, and the bar with air conditioning. Since then, I've given up drinking... but I'll bet Tommy still loves selfies.”





*Dan Bennett*  
*September 13, 2018*  
*San Diego, California*

"Surprised to learn that night that like me he was born in San Diego."



*Jim Singer*  
*September 13, 2018*  
*San Diego, California*



*Thomas McCartney  
September 13, 2018  
San Diego, California*





*Robin Andreoli*  
*May 2, 2019*  
*Fairfield, Connecticut*

“Tommy was on tour with The Lemonheads. I had just had back surgery but was determined to go and his solo acoustic set was fantastic. Also, super sweet that night; when I asked if he'd be up for taking a photo, he said ‘sure’ grabbed my phone and said ‘I’ll do it.’

I'll never replace this phone! My husband thinks I'm crazy... I also held onto a paper cup that Tommy drank out of in 1989.”



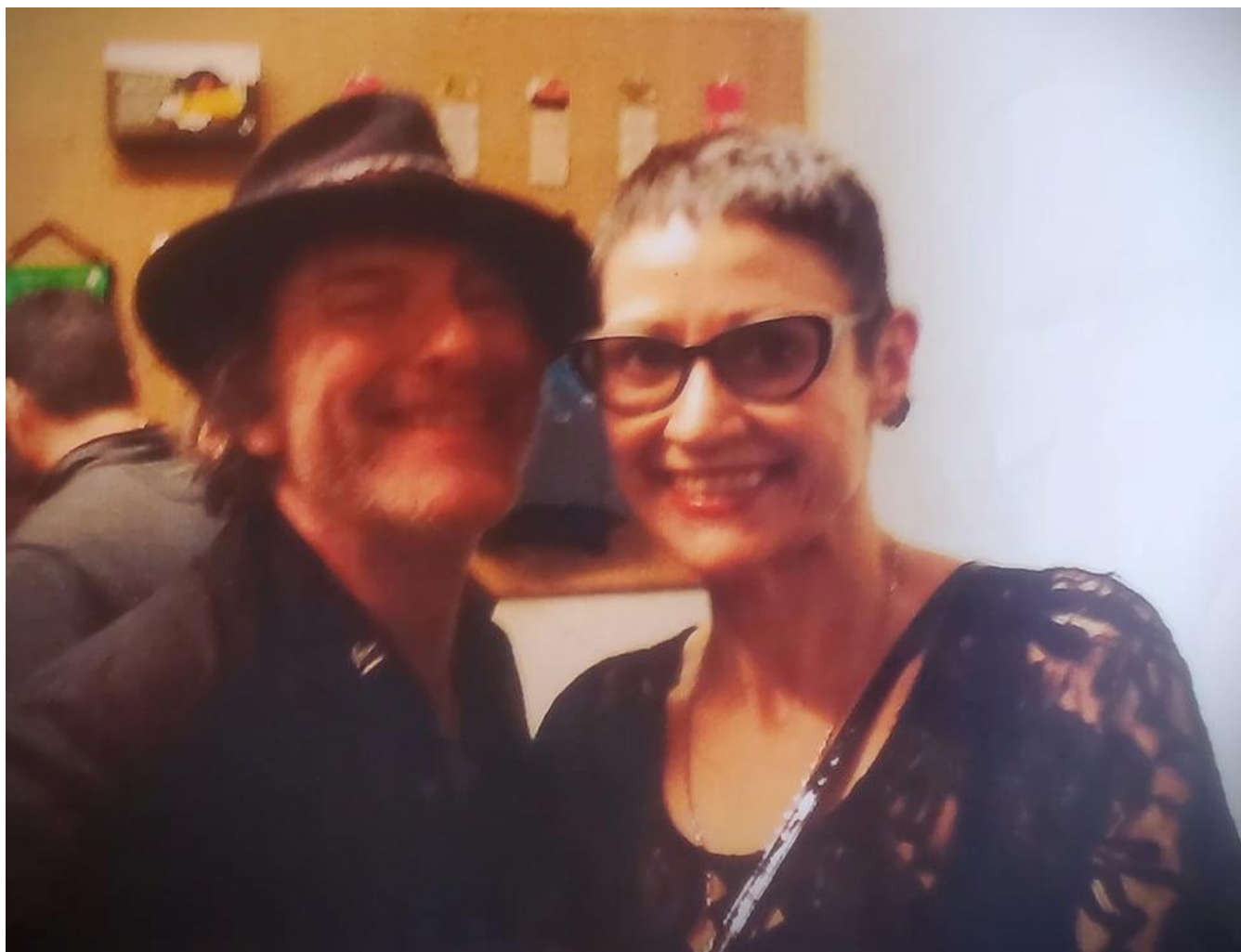
*Nick Perry  
May 6, 2019  
Cleveland, Ohio*

“Tommy was drunk off his ass and he was very cool about signing both Replacements vinyl boxsets and both Bash & Pop albums! He was a bit reluctant to take a pic, but he did! Tommy opened for The Lemonheads that same night. Amazing show!”



*Steve Smith & KA Dugstad  
May 18, 2019  
Vancouver, British Columbia*





*Kimberly Haggard  
May 19, 2019  
Portland, Oregon*



*Diana Duncan  
June 14, 2019  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*



*Diana Duncan  
June 14, 2019  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

“He got the t-shirt from someone in the audience. I think they swapped.”





*Steve and Annie Parys  
August 2019  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

“Killer show! The place was so small it was like playing in someone’s living room. Packed with maybe 50 rabid fans. I was up front literally within five feet of Tommy the whole night. Great great fun.”



*Tommy Tousey  
October 19, 2019  
Green Bay, Wisconsin*

"The venue used to be a head shop, and I worked there for 3 or 4 years in the 90's. I played a lot of Replacements in that store while I was working, so it was very surreal watching Tommy Stinson play there decades later: Last night: Me 'hello' Other voice 'is this Tommy?' 'Yes' 'Tommy TWO-zee?' 'Tousey—but yeah. Who's this?' 'Why does everyone say your name wrong?' 'I dunno...who is this?' 'Tommy Fuckin Stinson! Where are you?' 'I'm driving. I'm about fifteen minutes out.' 'Get the fuck down here. I go on at 8:30!' 'Ok. Bye.' 'Bye.'"



*Ginger Sky of **Wasted Pretty**  
October 19, 2019  
Green Bay, Wisconsin*





*Sean Fitzgerald  
December 10, 2019.  
Hamburg, New York (Buffalo area)*

"House party. Soon after as night went on I was a dumb sloppy mess. Sorry Buffalo."



*Rick Criden  
December 10, 2019  
Hamburg, New York*



*Ed Dowling*  
*December 12, 2019*  
*Syracuse, New York*

“Tommy performed in the lobby/atrium of a beautiful old bank building in downtown Syracuse. The building now has some small shops and also a small bar/restaurant. It was a great show in a beautiful, intimate space. It was a lot of fun, everyone was in great spirits, and Tommy hung around for photos after! A very memorable evening.”





*Carol Lowinger  
February 20, 2020  
Bordentown, New Jersey*

“One selfie (he insisted) of the 3 of us. We went to the early show and afterward went for a drink across the street at the Old Towne Pub. Tommy came in between shows and hung out with a bunch of us who had seen the show. As usual, he was friendly, gracious and funny. I have met him before and he was the same as those times. Such a fun memory! My last pre-Covid live show!”



*Peter Culos*  
*February 20, 2020*  
*Bordentown, New Jersey*

“Just before the COVID shutdown. There was a bar across the street from the venue and I knew he’d walk in. It was the third time I’d met him in a bar and that goes back to the late 80’s. I also met him on the board walk in Belmar, NJ. He’s a humble dude who loves his fans!”



*Brian Reiss  
February 20, 2020  
Bordentown, New Jersey*

“My buddy Denis and I hung with Tommy last year quite a while after his Bordentown, NJ show.”





*Jamie MacDonald  
February 21, 2020  
Baltimore, Maryland*

“This pic is my daughter and me with Tommy after his solo show shortly before the world shut down due to Covid. He was super cool talking to us, and as soon as he heard she was in college he shifted to talking to her about her major (she’s in media arts and design). He was really encouraging to her about her desire to get into video post-production, saying there aren’t enough women doing that sort of thing. It was a really memorable night.”



*Cindy Jepson*

*March 1, 2020*

*Our kitchen in Roanoke, Virginia*

"Our son who is a HUGE fan set it up for him to play in our basement and it was the best night ever. It was a perfect ending to normalcy before the s\$&t hit the fan."



*Scott Downs  
March 2, 2020  
Exton, Pennsylvania*

“My friend Rick Snow hosted what would be the final show for many before the world went on lockdown. A fine time was had by all, celebrating with drinks after the show. I’m the one with glass in hand behind Tommy. Big shoutout to Anthony DeCecco, for inviting me onstage after the show to sing a Stones cover with him. It was only to an audience of 2 or 3, but a bucket list item for me!”





*Lauren Kelly  
March 2, 2020  
Exton, Pennsylvania*



*Neil Cleaverhoffer  
October 2020  
Ringwood, New Jersey*



*Bobby Bauer*  
*June 23, 2021*  
*Ridgefield, Connecticut*





*Sarah Brown  
July 15, 2021  
Cleveland, Ohio*



*Thomas Matthews and Nanoook Jones (center) with Chip Roberts and Tommy Stinson*

*July 16, 2021*

*Thomas's backyard in Ypsilanti, Michigan*



*Dennis Cassiday  
July 17, 2021  
Charlotte, Michigan*





*Nathan Wissman  
July 22, 2021  
Columbus, Ohio*



*Tony Ford*  
*November 20, 2021*  
*San Diego, California*

"This was right after he signed my original copy of *Let It Be* and drew glasses on himself sitting on the roof. He was incredibly gracious and was happy to hear that I enjoyed the *Pleased to Meet Me* reissues of 'Hey Shadow' and 'Trouble on the Way'. 'That's cool, are they any good?' he asked. It was a great moment."



*Jacqueline Ramirez  
November 20, 2021  
San Diego, California*

“Never thought I would see Tommy play at a barbershop. He heard me singing along to ‘Anybody Else’ and said ‘Sing it sista!’ and kept smiling.”





*Matt somebody  
November 20, 2021  
San Diego, California*



*Neeco Beltran  
November 20, 2021  
San Diego, California*





*Joe Vincent and Sandy Lieb*

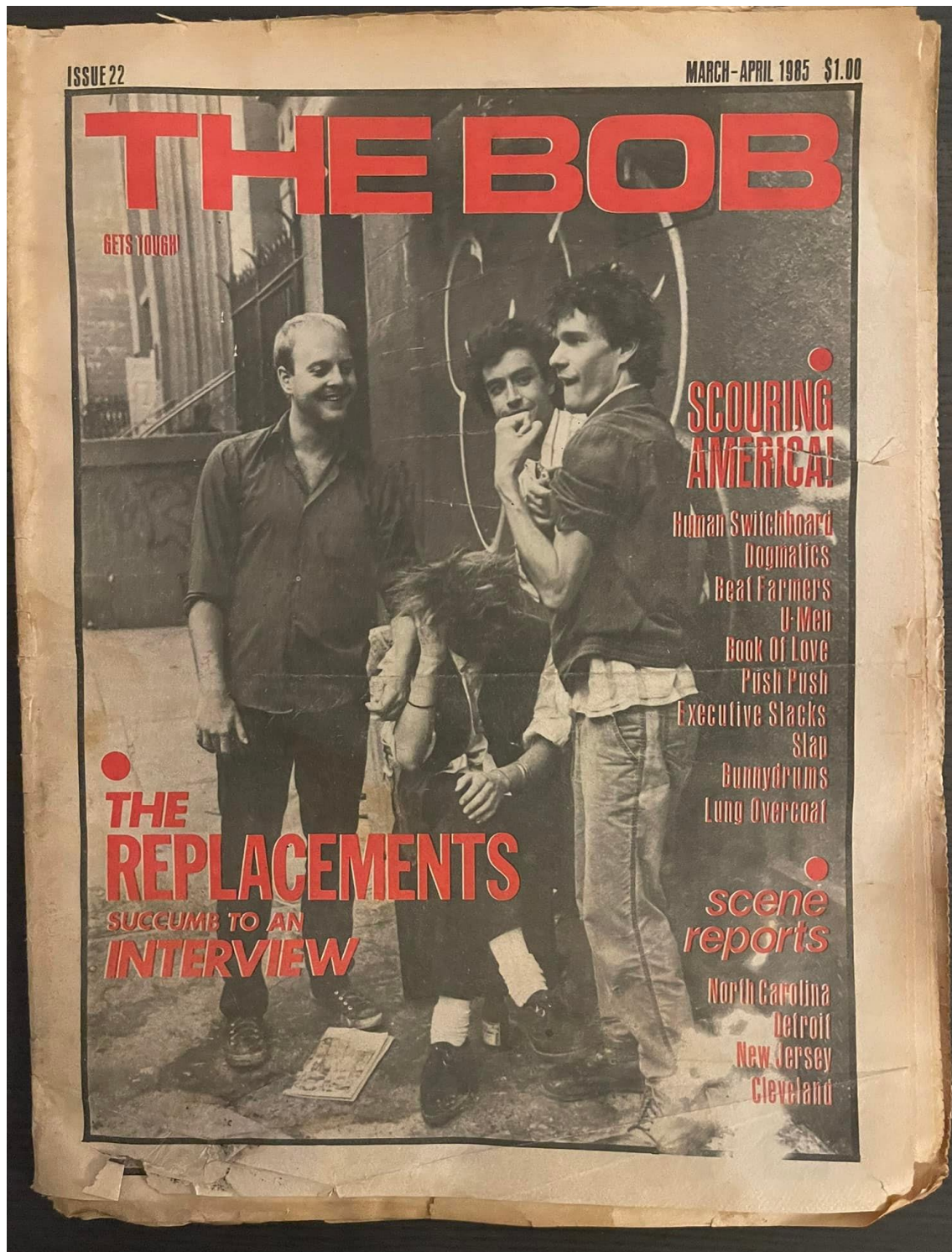
"Here's Tommy signing our marriage certificate."



**THE REPLACEMENTS SUCCUMB TO AN INTERVIEW**

THE BOB - MARCH-APRIL 1985

(scan thanks to Richard Levantini)





The Under Pop Rock Vocal Group

# MEET THE REPLACEMENTS

\*A Conversation with America's Phenomenal Pop C



INTERVIEW: BRUCE DAVIS

**F**our days before the conversation you're about to read took place, I was backstage at a Philadelphia club, socializing with three-quarters of the Replacements. Shortly before the band was slated to go onstage, the manager of the club popped into the tiny dressing room with a sour look on his puss. He explained that the opening band had elicited four calls from Philly's men-in-blue regarding complaints of too much noise from the music-hall's neighbors. The manager said "You guys have to play a short, quiet set," or something to that effect. Paul and Tommy looked at each other but made no promises to the crowd when minutes later the Replacements were onstage. They didn't look too happy. Paul explained to the crowd what proceeded to play a couple of their slower songs. It was obvious though that this wouldn't last. With a gleam in his eyes, Paul looked at Tommy and Bob. Suddenly they were ripped into a very intense version of "God Damn Job," one of the strablers from their debut EP. Halfway through the tune, Paul started hanging the face of his guitar into his stack of amplifiers, creating a wonderful haze of noise. He got a little carried away, though, smashing his guitar into the amps with such force that they toppled over backwards with Paul ending up sprawled on top of the mess. But the band never missed a beat and Paul rose from the tangled wires, jumped up to the mic and finished singing the song as the road-

ies struggled to right the fallen stack. With a fresh guitar in Paul's hands the band landed into one-and-a-half more of their most vicious tones before the manager of the club pulled the plug on them. End of show, near riot at the door, but no refunds for the Replacements fanatics who paid five bucks and two dollars per beer to see only four-and-a-half songs by this off-brilliant band. Later, Paul explained simply that "We're not playing for the manager of the bar, we're playing for the people who paid money to see the Replacements." None of the fans at the club showed any animosity towards the band—their supporters know the Replacements won't sell themselves short just to please a supposed authority figure (whether it be a bar manager or the Philadelphia Police Force).

The Replacements have recently released their third LP, *Let It Be*. This record presents the band in a somewhat more polished and retrospective manner, but it's just as vital and potent as any other Replacements disc. And it's receiving heaps of accolades from every critic who reviews it (Robert Christgau gave it an "A," and the Rolling Stone gave *Let It Be* four stars and called it "a brilliant Rock and Roll album").

Four days after the Philadelphia incident, I sat down to talk with Paul Westerberg (singer, guitarist, songwriter, leader) and Tommy Stinson (bassist). Surprisingly, Tommy's brother Bob (lead guitarist) also came by to say a few words (he usually shows a writer's tape recorder). Since drummer Chris Mars, of course, wouldn't come near our table at the back of Treason's City Gardens.

**THE BOB:** How long have you guys been on tour?  
**Paul Westerberg:** About three weeks now. Actually we've been playing since August, but we've been going home

for a week, then back on the road, then coming home for a week...  
**THE BOB:** Do you enjoy touring?  
**Paul:** [hesitantly] Yeah, I mean, we enjoy playing. The actual touring is not a whole lot of fun, but we like playing. When we sit at home and don't play we get angry.

**THE BOB:** Have you been staying in motels lately?  
**Paul:** Pretty much. We've slept on a few litchen floors this time around just because someone fucks up and we can't find the place, or we get in too late. But generally we can get a sleep motel.

**THE BOB:** Do the Replacements plan to tour Europe in the near future?  
**Tommy Stinson:** We'd probably go over there if—

**Paul:** —if the beer was cold.  
**Tommy:** It's not that. It's just that we don't want to go over there and starve. It'd be like when we first started touring here. We don't want to go backwards just because we play another country. We'd like to go over there if we can do it like we are now as far as money and being healthy and all.

**Paul:** I don't even know if those Limy faggots like us.  
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**THE BOB:** Is *Let It Be* selling well?  
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**Paul:** It's picking up. It's almost at the breaking point where we don't lose any money.

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**Tommy:** Yeah, college stations are playing the hell out of it.  
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off—but we'd just delete it.  
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**Paul:** I think on the other albums we made an effort to go the other way and leave the crummy stuff in, whereas it's natural to take out the mistakes in the editing. They would try to edit it and we'd say "No, no, no, leave that in!" But for the new record we just said "Okay, leave it out."

**Tommy:** [sarcastically] We're growing up, too.  
**THE BOB:** There are no drunken-type songs on your new album; nothing like "Treatment Blues?"

**Paul:** For one thing, we don't drink as much. We're trying to tell people that, but they think we're lying.

**THE BOB:** Maybe that's because among the people who know you guys among your real fans, you're thought of as really heavy drinkers. Especially you two.

**Tommy:** Who two? Me?  
**THE BOB:** Yeah, you and Paul. To people who listen to your records, and to people who go to your concerts and see you guys before the show at the bar drinking away, you're perceived of as heavy drinkers. How do you react to that perception that people have? Is it wrong?

**Tommy:** Well, it's just something that people can grasp onto. It's easy to talk about the bad things about a band, but it's kinda hard to find the good stuff unless you really—

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**THE BOB:** As a matter of fact, I recently heard a rumor that at one of your shows not too long ago you guys were so drunk that you couldn't get through any of your songs.

**Paul:** No. We do that when we're stone-cold sober—we can be horrible and people must think, "well, if you're this bad then what must be drunk." They just don't understand.

When we're havin' fun, we're not drunk. When we're really drunk, you can usually tell—looks like we don't want to be there and we wish we were somewhere else. Anytime we're havin' fun—and that doesn't necessarily mean playing our songs right or don't what we're supposed to do—we're not drunk. And we haven't been drinking as much as we used to for a long time.

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## MEET THE REPLACEMENTS!

A conversation with America's Phenomenal Pop Combo

Interview: Bruce Davis

Four days before the conversation you're about to read took place, I was backstage at a Philadelphia club socializing with three-quarters of the Replacements. Shortly before the band was slated to go onstage, the manager of the club popped into the tiny dressing room with a sour look on his puss. He explained that the opening band had elicited four calls from Philly's men-in-blue regarding complaints of too much noise from the music-hall's neighbors. The manager said "You guys have to play a short, quiet set," or something to that effect. Paul and Tommy looked at each other but made no promises to



the intruder. Ten minutes later the Replacements were onstage. They didn't look too happy. Paul explained to the crowd what the manager had told them, and they proceeded to play a couple of their slower songs. It was obvious though this wouldn't last. With a gleam in his eyes, Paul looked at Tommy and Bob. Suddenly they were ripping into a very intense version of "God Damn Job," one of the thrashers from their **Stink** EP. Halfway through the tune, Paul started banging the face of his guitar into his stack of amplifiers, creating a wonderful blaze of noise. He got a little carried away, though, smashing his guitar into the amps with such force that they toppled over with Paul sprawled out on top of the mess. But the band never missed a beat and Paul rose from the tangled wires, jumped up to the mic and finished singing the song as the roadies struggled to right the fallen stack. With a fresh guitar in Paul's hands the band launched into one-and-a-half more of their most vicious tunes before the manager of the club pulled the plug on them. End of the show, near riot at the door; but no refunds for the Replacements fanatics who paid five bucks and two dollars per beer to see only four-and-a-half songs by this oft-brilliant band. Later, Paul explained simply that "We're not playing for the manager of the bar, we're playing for the people who paid money to see the Replacements." None of the fans at the club showed any animosity towards the band – their supporters know the Replacements won't sell themselves short just to please a supposed authority figure (whether it be a bar manager or the Philadelphia Police Force).

The Replacements have recently released their third LP, *Let It Be*. This record represents the band as a somewhat more polished and introspective manner, but it's just as vital and potent as any other Replacements disc. And it's receiving heaps of accolades from every critic who reviews it (Robert Christgau gave it an "A"; and the Rolling Stone gave *Let It Be* four stars and called it "a brilliant Rock and Roll album.").

Four days after the Philadelphia incident, I sat down with Paul Westerberg (singer, guitarist, songwriter, leader) and Tommy Stinson (bassist). Surprisingly, Tommy's brother Bob (lead guitar) also came by to say a few words (he usually shuns a writer's tape recorder). Silent drummer Chris Mars, of course, wouldn't come near our table at the back of the Trenton City's Gardens.

**THE BOB: How long have you guys been on tour?**

Paul Westerberg: About three weeks now. Actually we've been playing since August, but we've been going home for a week, then back on the road, then coming home for a week...

**THE BOB: Do you enjoy touring?**

Paul [hesitantly]: Yeah, I mean, we enjoy playing. The actual touring is not a whole lot of fun, but we like playing. When we sit at home and don't play we get antsy.

**THE BOB: Have you been staying in motels lately?**



Paul: Pretty much. We've slept on a few kitchen floors this time around just because someone fucks up and we can't find the place, or we get in too late. But generally we can get a sleazy motel.

**THE BOB: Do the Replacements plan to tour Europe in the near future?**

Tommy: We'd probably go over there if--

Paul: --if the beer was cold.

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**THE BOB: How are you perceived in Minneapolis? Are you considered big stars?**

Paul: No. People on the street recognize us, but no one asks us for autographs. We sign a few autographs when we tour, which we think is ridiculous, but at home that never happens.

**THE BOB: Is Let It Be selling well?**

Tommy: (Enthusiastically sarcastic) Gravy!

Paul: It's pickin' up. It's almost at the breaking point where we don't owe any money.

**THE BOB: Has it gotten any commercial airplay?**

Paul: A little bit. I don't know what stations. College stations are playing it.

Tommy: Yeah, college stations are playing the hell out of it.

**THE BOB: You've got a song on the new album that criticizes MTV...**

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**THE BOB: ...have you thought about making a video for any of your new songs?**

Tommy: We've never really planned on it. We might do one if we could do it our way—if we could do it as something fun instead of just doing it to use as a promotional tool. But I think we can do fine without a video. If you do a video you get all these MTV morons hanging out at shows "digging the music."

Paul: We'll wait until doing a video is the epitome of doing the wrong thing--totally uncool—then we'll probably make a full blown one using all the cliches.

**THE BOB: Your album is a bit more polished than the other ones. There's none of that "tape rolling," "so what!" kind of stuff.**

Paul: We just left it out. That stuff was there too -- we'd tell 'em to fuck off -- but we'd just delete it.

**THE BOB: Did you start out with the intent to make Let It Be a more polished record?**

Tommy: I don't think we made a deliberate effort --

Paul: I think on the other albums we made an effort to go the other way and leave the crummy stuff in, whereas it's natural to take out the mistakes in the editing. They would try to edit it and we'd say, "no, no, no, leave that in!" But for the new record, we just said "okay, leave it out."

Tommy: [sarcastically] We're growing up, too.

**THE BOB: There are no drunken-type songs on your new album; nothing like "Treatment Bound" ...**

Paul: For one thing, we don't drink as much. We're tryin' to tell people that, but they think we're lying.

**THE BOB: Maybe that's because among the people who know you guys, among your real fans, you're thought of as really heavy drinkers. Especially you two.**

Tommy: Who two?! Me!?

**THE BOB: Yeah, you and Paul. To people who listen to your records, and to people who go to your concerts and see you guys before the show at the bar drinking away, you're perceived of as heavy drinkers. How do you react to that perception that people have? Is it wrong?**

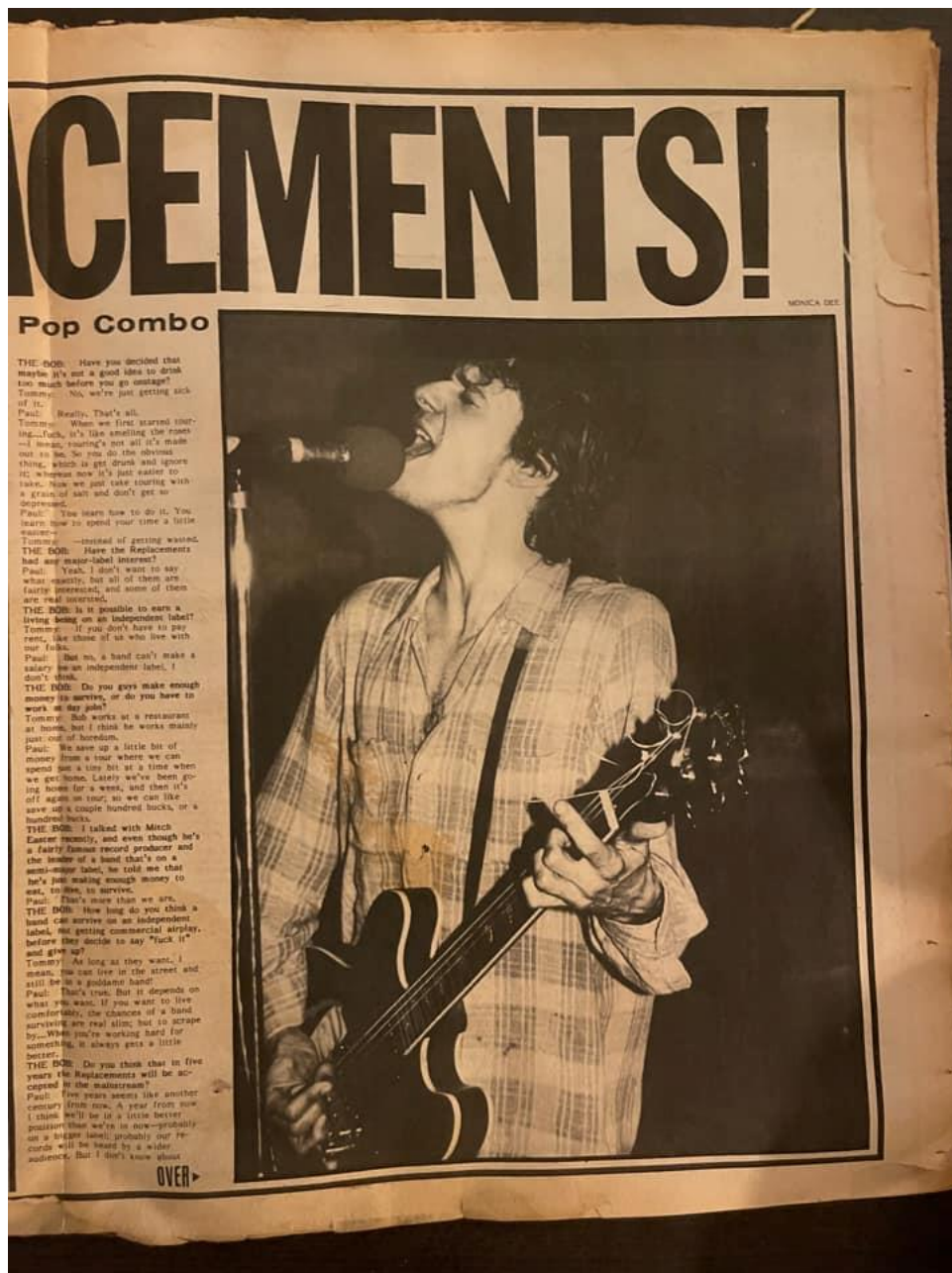
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**THE BOB:** As a matter of fact, I recently heard a rumor that at one of your shows not too long ago you guys were so drunk that you couldn't get through any of your songs.

**Paul:** No. We do that when we're stone-cold sober - - we can be horrible - - and people must think, "well, if they're this bad they must be drunk." They just don't understand. When we're havin' fun, we're not drunk. When we're really drunk, you can usually tell - it looks like we don't want to be there and we wish we were somewhere else. Anytime we're having' fun - and that doesn't necessarily mean playing our songs right or doin' what we're supposed to do - when we're smilin' and havin' fun we're not drunk. And we haven't been drinking as much as we used to for a long time.



**THE BOB: Have you decided that maybe it's not a good idea to drink too much before you go onstage?**

Tommy: No, we're just getting sick of it.

Paul: Really. That's all.

Tommy: When we first started touring...fuck, it's like smelling the roses – I mean, touring's not all it's made out to be. So you do the obvious thing, which is to get drunk and ignore it; whereas now it's just plain easier to take. Now we just take touring with a grain of salt and don't get so depressed.

Paul: You learn how to do it. You learn how to spend your time a little easier --

Tommy: -- instead of getting wasted.

**THE BOB: Have the Replacements had any major-label interest?**

Paul: Yeah, I don't want to say what exactly, but all of them are fairly interested, and some of them are real interested.

**THE BOB: Is it possible to earn a living being on an independent label?**

Tommy: If you don't have to pay rent, like those of us who live with our folks.

Paul: But no, a band can't make a salary on an independent label. I don't think.

**THE BOB: Do you guys make enough money to survive, or do you have to work at day jobs?**

Tommy: Bob works at a restaurant at home, but I think he works mainly just out of boredom.

Paul: We save up a little bit of money from a tour where we can spend just a tiny bit at a time when we get home. Lately we've been going home for a week, and then it's off again on tour; so we can like save up a couple hundred bucks, or a hundred bucks.

**THE BOB: I talked with Mitch Easter recently, and even though he's a fairly famous record producer and the leader of a band that's on a semi/major label, he told me that he's just making enough money to eat, to live, to survive.**

Paul: That's more than we are.

**THE BOB: How long do you think a band can survive on an independent label, not getting commercial airplay, before they decide to say "fuck it" and give up?**

Tommy: As long as they want, I mean, you can live in the street and still be in a goddamn band!

Paul: That's true. But it depends on what you want. If you want to live comfortably, the chances of a band surviving are real slim; but to scrape by... When you're working hard for something, it always get a little better.

**THE BOB: Do you think that in five years the Replacements will be accepted in the mainstream?**

Paul: Five years seems like another century from now. A year from now I think we'll be in a little better position than we're in now – probably on a bigger label, probably our records will be heard by a wider audience. But I don't know about five years; that's a long time. We've already been going for five years. How many bands can you think of that were around for ten years, and after ten years were still good? [Bob Stinson comes over and sits down at the table with us.]

**THE BOB: Are the four Replacements real close friends?**

Paul: [very sarcastically] No, we're definitely just business associates. I hate every member of the band's guts.

**THE BOB: The reason I ask that – and now that Bob's here I can ask him too – is that it seems like you two [Paul and Tommy] are real tight; and there's Bob and Chris who seem to be close friends. The five times I've seen the Replacements, Paul and Tommy have been hanging out together, and Bob and Chris have been out together.**

Paul: We all like each other a whole lot. But our personalities – Tommy's and mine – are similar. And Bob and Chris dress kind of ridiculously.

Tommy: Yeah, they get along together as far as the goofiness goes.

Paul: Yeah, Bob and Chris like to eat and watch TV and smoke a lot; and Tom and I don't.

**THE BOB: Bob, you do seem to have a strange outlook on life. Like the first time I saw the band you were wearing a dress. You seem to be a real happy-go-lucky type of guy.**

Bob Stinson: [with a wide grin] Why, thank you.

Paul: Tell him about Mr. Hyde. He's the fifth member of the Replacements.

Bob: Me and Hyde go back a long way. I introduced him to the band.

Paul: He shows up every now and then – when Bob doesn't want to play, Mr. Hyde plays for him. He's not going to be here tonight though. Or is he?

**THE BOB: I don't want to embarrass you Bob, but I think you're one of the most amazing guitar players I've ever seen.**

Bob: [grabs the tape recorder and holds it closer to me] Well, would you say that again?

**THE BOB: I think you're an amazing guitar player. How long have you been playing guitar?**

Bob: What time is it?

**THE BOB: Did you start when you were like ten years old?**

Bob: Actually I've been playing for about six or seven years.

**THE BOB: How did Paul become the Replacements' songwriter? He writes all the lyrics, and most of the songs are by him.**

Tommy: Well, when the band started he just took it upon himself – it just sort of worked out that way. But now we all write songs.

**THE BOB: How come no one else has their own songs on any album?**

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**THE BOB: Do you think in the future other members will have their songs on the albums?**

Paul: I think so, sure. Probably the next album.

Tommy: I don't know; it'd be kinda weird. After five years of being the Replacements' bass player I wouldn't want to come in and start being a lead singer.

Bob: It's still the Replacements though, so fuck it.

**THE BOB: Paul, all of your songs seem to be personal. Some of them seem to be true-life stories, and others seem to just express your emotions. How do you write a song?**

Tommy: Fuck! Drink yourself to oblivion and get depressed and think of the first –

Paul: -- Tommy! [pause] I don't know that's a hard question. I guess the best ones usually come out of depression or frustration. I have a hard time writing happy songs.

**THE BOB: Are most of your songs based on true stories?**

Paul: Yeah, they're all basically true.



**THE BOB: What band were you watching when you “Bought A Headache”?**

Paul: Pat Travers and Foghat.

**THE BOB: Did Tommy actually have his tonsils out?**

Paul: No. Actually that song [“Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out”] was originally called “Rico Gets A Haircut” //

Tommy: -- yeah, we were calling Bob “Rico” for a while –

Paul: --but we wanted something a lit more strong: “rip! Rip!” instead of “snip snip.”

Paul: [deadly serious] I’m the most satisfied person in the world. There’s nothing I’d rather do...there’s no place I’d rather be than right here talking to you. And I mean that.

Tommy: That’s absolutely true. This is like the funnest thing I could imagine doing in life. Not talking to you, of course. But I mean touring and playing in a rock band.

**THE BOB: It does seem like fun.**

Paul: **THE BOB: On Let It Be you have a very emotional song called “Unsatisfied”. Are you really unsatisfied?**

Well, Bruce; it’s been a pleasure. But I suggest you get a new name for your magazine or whatever it is.

Bob: Call it **The Paul**.

Paul: How about **The Robert**?

From the outset of their show this night in Tranton, it was obvious that the Replacements had not over-imbibed -- they were “smilin’ and heavin’ fun.” They played many of their old and new faves, as well as a few gems like Motorhead’s “Ace of Spades”; “If Only I Had A Brain” from **The Wizard of Oz**; and a creative combination of the music from U2’s “I Will Follow” with the lyrics from their own “Kids Don’t Follow”.

But this show was also special for another reason. Every other time I have seen the Replacements, most of their fans didn’t really take the band seriously. It seemed like half the crowd at previous shows would get their jollies by yelling playful insults at the band, while the other half would just bop around mindlessly as if they were at a frat party watching some half-assed cover band. But Let It Be seems to have convinced people that the Replacements are a band to be taken seriously. The audience at this night’s show stood mesmerized by the band, reciprocating all the Replacements’ energy with enthusiastic and heartfelt cheering after each song. The band appeared to sense that something special was happening and the show became more enthralling and intense as the night progressed. The last song of the set was a blistering version of Kiss’ “Black Diamond” [the only cover they’ve ever put on an album] that they tore into it

with a passionate energy that I've rarely experienced at any other concert by any other band. At the end of the song Paul was so overcome with the night's power that he smashed his guitar into pieces as the band banged out the final notes. And this was no mere act of showmanship; no trite Pete Townshend imitation. In fact the guitar was one of Paul's favorites – his primary axe at all five Replacements shows that I've seen.

I came away feeling that this was one of the most exciting concerts I have ever seen. And I also came away with a new favorite band. The Replacements, in my mind, are the most vital, important rock band on the scene today. I only hope they don't disintegrate from their own intensity [a la The Sex Pistols], or fade into oblivion due to lack of attention [as did the New York Dolls]. Do yourself a favor – experience the Replacements now before it's too late.

(Just before we went to the presses, The Bob learned that the Replacements have just been signed to Sire Records. We at The Bob wish Sire and the 'Mats the best of luck.)

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CONTINUED

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**Paul:** No. Actually that song ("Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out") was originally called "Rico Gets A Haircut".

**Tommy:** —yeah, we were calling Bob "Rico" for a while.

**Paul:** —but we wanted something a little more strong: "rip rip" instead of "rip and".

**THE BOB:** On Let It Be you have a very emotional song called "Lustiest-Dead" Are you really unsatisfied?

**Paul:** (loudly) unsatisfied! I'm the most satisfied person in the world. There's nothing I'd rather do—there's no place I'd rather be than right here talking to you. And I mean that.

**Tommy:** That's absolutely true. This is like the funnest thing I could imagine doing in life. Not talking to you, or course. But I mean touring and playing in a rock band.

**THE BOB:** It does seem like fun, Paul. Well, Dave: it's been a

pleasure. But I suggest you get a new name for your magazine or whatever it is.

**Paul:** Call it The Paul.

**Bob:** How about The Bob?

**Paul:** —(Tommy) (paul) I don't know, that's a hard question. I guess the best ones usually come out of depression or frustration. I have a hard time writing happy songs.

**THE BOB:** Are most of your songs based on true stories?

**Paul:** Yeah, they're all basically true.

**THE BOB:** What band were you watching when you "Bought A Headache"?

**Paul:** Pat Travers and Foghat.

**THE BOB:** Did Tommy actually get his tonsils out?

**Paul:** No. Actually that song ("Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out") was originally called "Rico Gets A Haircut".

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**THE BOB:** It does seem like fun, Paul. Well, Dave: it's been a

ed. The last song of the set was a blistering version of Kiss' "Black Diamond" (the only cover they've ever put on an album); they tore into it with a passionate energy that I've rarely experienced at any other concert by any other band. At the end of the song Paul was so overcome with the night's power that he smashed his guitar into pieces as the band banged out the final notes. And this was no mere act of showmanship; no trite Pete Townshend imitation. In fact the guitar was one of Paul's favorites—his primary axe at all five Replacements shows that I've seen.

I came away feeling that this was one of the most exciting concerts I have ever seen. And I also came away with a new favorite band. The Replacements, in my mind, are the most vital, important rock band on the scene today. I only hope they don't disintegrate from their own intensity [a la The Sex Pistols], or fade into oblivion due to lack of attention [as did the New York Dolls]. Do yourself a favor—experience the Replacements now before it's too late.

Just before we went to the presses, The Bob learned that the Replacements have just been signed to Sire Records. We at The Bob wish Sire and the 'Mats the best of luck.



## REPLACEMENTS

## BOB STINSON STORIES

“Bob Stinson and I went to a house party in Uptown (Minneapolis). They were friends of mine, so I told him to take it easy. Instead, he went straight to their kitchen, bagged up all their booze, threw a pack of lit Black Cats on the floor, and escaped out the back door. I followed him.”

*David Benson*

*February 19, 2021*

*fin.*

“Life can only be understood backward, but it must be lived forward.”

- Søren Kierkegaard