

It Happened...But Nobody Noticed/Temps Supplémentaire

CD release, with Saucers, Stratford Survivors, Joe Dias, Poodle Boys, Hot Bodies, Sal Paradise, The Excerpts, The Plan, The Furors, Dada Banks. 8 p.m., April 25 at Cafe Nine, 250 State St., New Haven. \$5. (203) 789-8281. cafenine.com.

In 1982, New Haven indie label Gustav Records released *It Happened...But Nobody Noticed*, a compilation LP featuring 13 tracks by as many bands that had frequented the local punk scene during the few years prior. Nearly a year ago, Gustav honcho and musician in his own right (see: *Mirrors*, *Rocket from the Tombs*, *Saucers*, *The Plan*, *Bell System*) Craig Bell announced plans to give that long-out-of-print album its first CD release within the year, its 25th anniversary. By the time every band had given clearance (per copyright law) and the CDs were pressed, we were into '08. And although the landmark anniversary has passed, Bell and a handful of dedicated archivists and back-in-the-day scenesters have managed to assemble enough extras to make the wait worthwhile a full second disc, *Temps Supplémentaire*, of 13 more tracks from roughly the same era as the original, and a CD release show, on Friday, featuring 10 bands represented on both discs (or featuring key members of those original bands).

When listening to this double-disc set (available through independisc.com) documenting a scene from which today's young punks and indie rockers are distanced by one or two generations, several things jump out. One is how fresh the material sounds. Unlike a lot of the slick commercial records of the early '80s, these simply-recorded tracks sound raw and alive, dating far better than records marred by that era's big-budget pop production values. It reminds us the underground rock scene is still partly dealing with the fallout of that period. Another is how strong the second disc is. It's as stylistically diverse and on the same level of songwriting and inspiration as the first. These aren't barrel-scraping bonus tracks.

"There were bands that I wanted on the record [in 1982] that didn't have something they felt comfortable with," Bell explains. Getting material from those bands and others was much easier 25 years later; he'd found himself with 13 worthy tracks by autumn. There are still more bands, Bell says, that he'd like to see compiled.

The scene centered around Ron's Place, the Chapel Street dive bar where the Indochine Pavillion restaurant is now, was a fertile one. The Hot Bodies were the first band to book shows there, followed by Bell's own Saucers and a few others, and, Bell says, "within a few months there was music going on seven nights a week."

Which leads to another point about *It Happened*, it's quite diverse. There's some of what would now pass as punk rock, but also power-pop, new wave, art rock, post-punk. The scene wasn't huge, but it was compressed; through most of the '80s, it was based around mostly one music venue at a time. "There was no fracturing, because there was nowhere to fracture to," Bell explains. "You could go down on a Tuesday night to see one band, and you'd be exposed to all kinds of stuff. You'd go as a musician, as a fan, just hang out and be part of the scene. You had to go out into the world and meet people like you, well, maybe not exactly like you, but you'd like 'em anyway."

Friday's show offers a sample of what Bell's getting at and what's on the double-disc, a record Bell hopes will re-ignite interest in New Haven's underground rock history. "There's just so much more out there that really should be archived," Bell says. "I hope one of the benefits of this is that people come forward and pick it up from here."

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New Haven CT 2008