

# Artsweek

The Weekly Arts and Entertainment Supplement to the Daily Nexus



**INSIDE:** Interviews with  
**PAVEMENT** and **MIKE WATT!!**

**ALSO:** Words on Eazy-E  
with the Beastie Boys' Mike D,  
Cypress Hill's B-Real,  
Dickie from the Bosstones,  
and Beck!!!

**Plus:**

THE WHOLE TRUTH ABOUT COURTNEY LOVE



Artsweek's Noah Blumberg, Jason Sattler and Eric Steuer spent a day this summer at Lollapalooza. In this very special issue of Artsweek, you will find Noah's notes on their experiences, as well as a plethora of swell interviews with the stars of the greatest show on Earth.

I think Perry Farrell once said that Lollapalooza is like a microcosm of the real world. In some ways, he's right. I'll explain.

Thinking that you're sneaking backstage at Lollapalooza is really thrilling. Jason and I were already excited enough: We had managed to snag free press passes to the Irvine Meadows show. But we didn't realize our true good fortune until we arrived and saw that with our special tickets, we would be allowed to enter the show through a side gate open expressly for the press and other important people. Unfortunately, that stupid road just led us to the same darn place where everybody else was. See? Just like the real world.

Anyway, we weren't about to let this discourage us. We troopers trudged on and managed to sneak backstage (and get kicked out) twice.

This was not the end, but was instead the beginning of our Lollapalooza fun. We met *Artsweek* assistant editor Eric Charles Steuer in front of the second stage. Eric had entered himself in the singing contest and was allowed to get onstage and perform. Some of the other contestants did moronic things like impersonate the Stone Temple Pilots' Weiland, try to impress people by singing about the size of their genitals and just yell real loud. Not Eric, he did something far more moronic. After asking Mike Watt to beatbox for him, he yelled, "Yo, this is fo' the homies!" Despite a giant sigh from the crowd of 500 or so, Eric went into his rendition of Marky Mark's "Good Vibrations." It was one of the funniest things we had ever seen.

Shortly after, we ventured toward the "festival" part of the tour. Jason and I were hungry, so we hunted around for good food. On the way, we passed a KROQ booth where Jason screamed profanities rhyming with ROQ at the DJ. Then Jason and Eric bought Herbal Ecstasy, which failed miserably to work. We ended up getting burritos for like \$12 each or something. It was kinda ridiculous.

Those passes did end up being good for something. Jason and I were allowed in the press area for interviews and stuff. We received an indescribable thrill when we found ourselves mingling with The Famous. Bands and people we saw include the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Pavement, Beck, Fishbone's Angelo, Cypress Hill's B-Real, Elica's Justine Frischmann and the Beastie Boys' Mike D. We actually got to speak with and take pictures of some of the stars. None of the pictures came out, though.

When we got back outside, we saw Eric talking to some girls. One of the girls had given him a snow cone because he looked like he was dying in the heat. They got to talking about music and she told him that she was in a punk band called Rainbow Curtains. Later that night, Thurston Moore of Sonic Youth dedicated "Teenage Riot" to the girl's band.

I ran into an old friend, Mark Weinberg, during Pavement's set. He told me that he had recently dropped out of college because he and his band had been signed to Warner Brothers Records. Being that Mark was known for lying, I felt it necessary to verify this story with his friends. It checked out.

This was very distracting. I'm a big fan of Pavement and wanted to catch their entire set. What I did get to hear was moving and loud.

As for the rest of the main stage acts, the bands that were good were very, very good. There was a general consensus among us that Cypress Hill would most likely suck because in the span of only a few years, they have managed to go from great to progressively ungreat. Fortunately, we were wrong. They were surprisingly excellent and had us all anticipating the release of their next album, supposedly due out any day now.

After Cypress Hill came Hole. Although Eric and I didn't watch much of the set, Jason stayed behind and he said later that they were good. Supposedly, the only wacky thing Courtney Love did was stay onstage too long so that security had to drag her off. What a kooky lady.

It was a mistake to leave Jason by himself, I guess. We spent 90 percent of Sonic Youth's set looking for him. We never even found him until after everybody had left and we were almost the only three people left. We weren't mad, though. We had a great day.

In hindsight, Lollapalooza was filled with laughter, good conversation, frustration and bad trips. Like Perry Farrell would say: It was a lot like the real world.

—Eric Steuer and Noah Blumberg

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# Mike Watt

We sneaked backstage and began browsing around. We saw members of Versus and Blonde Redhead and then we saw Mike Watt. Watt, former member of the Minutemen, FIREHOSE and creator of the star-studded solo album *Ball Hog or Tugboat*, was messing with his bass. We hesitated and slowly walked past, kind of nervous. We decided to approach him, but just before we could a really tall, muscular security guard said to us, "OK guys, let's

really appreciate it. Mike Watt: No problem. You give people a little bit of authority and they become complete assholes. AW: So, how do you like being on the second stage? MW: I actually prefer it. You go out there and watch the Bosstones on the main stage and it's kinda empty and everyone's so far away and that's kind of a bummer. The second stage is a lot like where I came from. Well, actually I grew up

AW: What do the other bands think about the second stage? MW: (smiles) I can only speak for Mike Watt. AW: You know, moshing really disturbs me. MW: Yeah, totally. It never used to be like this. It's all alterna-jocks beating up girls. It was just the freaks before. No one wanted to hurt each other. No one fit in and we all just got together 'cause there was nowhere else to go. There is no alternative or punk anymore, this is all

**"Some people say that punk is the new rock 'n' roll, but it's not. Punk has always been against rock 'n' roll. It's about empowerment."**

go. You're not supposed to be back here." Mike Watt whom we hadn't even talked to yet, went and found the person in charge and allowed us to remain backstage and ask him some questions. It was the best. What a great way to begin the day. One of American punk's forefathers had stood up for us!

*Artsweek: Thanks a lot for doing that [keeping us backstage and allowing us to do an interview]. We*

with arena rock. For a long time I didn't even know that a bass was different from a guitar. I was like, "It only has four strings?" You know, 'cause everything was so far away. But when I started playing, I was a punk. It was all little shitty clubs with no one there, kinda like this. I think it's better to have the people right up close. That scares a lot of people, being so close together and cramped, but that was the scene.

mainstream. AW: We totally agree. Instead of calling anything alternative anymore, we call it MALT, meaning either Major Label Alternative or MTV-supported Alternative. MW: That's good. I'll remember that. "Alternative" was invented by some ad guy to make his job easier. He knew he could make lots of money. It certainly was never meant to mean different. After Kurt and Nirvana hit so big, the

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# Shows Artsweek's Jason Sattler and Noah Blumberg What a Little Sincerity Can Accomplish.

audience just said, "No more Motley Crue." You see, Kurt came from the same background. People thought he was from arena rock, but he wasn't. He was into Black Flag and the Germs. He hated all this alternative crap.  
**AW:** Is your next album gonna be another solo album?  
**MW:** The next one will be with a band because I miss

great and I know he wants to play everything, but it's almost a shame that he plays guitar during the shows because he's a baaad drummer, one of the best ever.  
**AW:** What's love got to do with it?  
**MW:** It's got a lot to do with it. Sometimes it's all there is, just the stage and you. If there wasn't a lotta love in it, why would you

**MW:** Well you know, Sonic Youth is still true. Green Day is OK. I heard that they fired their manager because he was trying to make them too commercial. They got a lot of shit for taking Pansy Division on the road with them. You know Pansy Division is a gay band and it pissed a lot of their jock fans off. You know, the guys who played football

own bands and figure out what's cool. Kids today are getting smarter, I think. I was doing a show with Jerry Lee Lewis and the Brian Setzer Orchestra and Jerry was telling me, "The kids today are much smarter. Back then, they would love anything that wasn't the same old shit regardless of if it was good or not." That's Jerry Lee Lewis and he's no brain surgeon himself.

**AW:** There's something I learned in Hebrew school that goes like this: Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow. Don't walk behind me, I may not lead. Just walk beside me and be my friend.

**MW:** That's a good one, I gotta remember that.

**AW:** When we were growing up, it was gangsta rap that was the music most going against the grain. Against the cops, everyone. That was kinda like punk to us.

**MW:** Definitely. I always believed that rap was the black punk. Ideas aren't meant to last or be the same for everyone. Everyone has to invent themselves.

**AW:** Just one last thing, did you ever go to a Grateful Dead show?

**MW:** No, it was never me. I was a punk. I'm still a punk.

**AW:** Thanks a lot.

**MW:** Oh, no problem. I'm sure I'll see you guys around.



it. Well, this one wasn't really a solo album anyway. It was great working with 77 different guys. It was like a bunch of little different bands. What Dave Grohl did with Foo Fighters is a solo album. He played everything on that album.

**AW:** That's such a great album, isn't it? But why did he put the other guys in the album photo with him?

**MW:** Just 'cause he's a sweetheart. The album is

be there? Punk wasn't just about the music, it's an attitude, a lifestyle. There's so much variety in the music that's called punk. You could be completely different from the next band that sounded like the Sex Pistols and still be punk. Everyone knew it was an attitude.

**AW:** What do you think about the fact that bands like Green Day and Offspring are what the kids think of when they think of punk?

in high school who had a chip on their shoulders, the guys who grow up to be cops. Some people say that punk is the new rock 'n' roll, but it's not. Punk has always been against rock 'n' roll. It's about empowerment. If you grew up in the '70s and went to arena rock shows like Yes, you never thought, "I can do that." But going to an early punk show you thought, "I'm gonna start a band." But the kids'll catch on. They'll start their

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# WHY IS IT THAT THE THINGS WE WANT MOST SEEM JUST OUT OF REACH?

Have you ever completely forgotten something really important? How about something that you've dreamed about for a long time and never really thought was possible until recently? Have you ever dreamed about becoming a master shoe builder? I don't know about the shoes, but I can identify with the first part.

It was the morning of July 25, 10:52 a.m. I casually gazed at the clock in my apartment and thought about making my way toward campus when I realized: My God! Pavement's drummer Steve West will be calling me at the Nexus in eight minutes and I haven't really prepared for the interview. This was particularly bone-headed on my part because Pavement has been one of my favorite bands since I got their debut album, *Slanted and Enchanted* in 1992.

Just as I walked into the office after a panicked 100 mph bike ride and set up my girlfriend's answering machine to record the conversation, Steve called and the interview was under way. I made up questions as I went along. It went pretty well, considering. I'm glad it worked out or I never would have forgiven myself.

When I was actually at Lollapalooza in Los Angeles, I had the opportunity to interview Pavement again. Matador Records' Spencer Gates brought bassist Mark Ibold and percussionist Bob Nastanovich to meet me in the press area. Unbelievably, I FORGOT AGAIN! I had these two guys wait for me while I, unaware of the time, hung out at the second stage waiting for an interview with the Roots that never happened. I'm a fool.

I would have to settle for just one interview. Steve called from the Lollapalooza show in Boston. He and the rest of Pavement played on the tour's big stage and loved every minute of it. Their latest album, *Wowee Zowee*, is readily available and well worth checking out. Not only for some tremendous songwriting, but also for a taste of Pavement's humorous, laid-back side, which is relatively new to their sound. Anyway, I genuinely enjoyed talk-

ing with Steve. He was very forthright and honest. What follows is an edited transcript of our conversation, baby.

**Artsweek:** So how's everything going?

**Steve West:** Well, it's a little muggy here in Boston. The Bosstones just played and pumped up the crowd. We're gettin' psyched to go on.

**AW:** Is it different playing for such big crowds?

**SW:** Yeah. The last crowd we played in

**AW:** Do you guys have any interesting famous person stories from the tour so far?

**SW:** Well, I've got one. After we played one day, Drew Barrymore, who's somewhat of a fan, was hanging out with her boyfriend Eric and she came up to me and said, "Steve! Steve! I have to ask you a question. During the set between the songs were you saying 'pussy'?" I said, "Drew, no. I would never. If I'm going to

down. So I picked it up and yelled, "Percy, Percy, Percy!" And poor Drew thought I was just being a foul-mouthed older guy. But we straightened it out later over a few drinks at a club.

**AW:** So, no Courtney Love stories?

**SW:** There's plenty of Courtney stories but I think they've already been covered by the press. She was in real good form in Seattle and Vancouver. Since then, she's been pretty much steady rockin' out every show with no real big mishaps or anything like that. She's pretty supportive.

**AW:** Do you have a favorite band that's on the tour right now?

**SW:** I would have to say I like The Jesus Lizard a lot, but there was this band, Doo Rag, that was playing earlier on the first part of the tour. They're from somewhere in the South, I believe. They were a real good band. I enjoyed them a lot. Elastica's on now, I'm looking forward to them. They just joined the tour a couple days ago. Moby, I'm kinda gettin' into him. He's this raver character on the second stage, kind of a rocking, raving personality. That's pretty interesting to check out.

**AW:** What are Pavement's favorite bands in general?

**SW:** Well, you can name 'em and probably someone in the band likes 'em. There's five of us and we're all big music listeners and record collectors. So, you name it and somebody would like it. But everyone's been a fan of Echo and the Bunnymen. Um, I mean basically, just any good rock band. We're not so specific that we limit ourselves to one general influence. If you know our music, you know that we're pretty diversified on the songwriting. You can pick out any song and it'll have some type of influence from any number of bands.

**AW:** Yeah, I was noticing that the guitar part in "Grave Architecture" sounds a bit like "True" by Spandau Ballet.

**SW:** Oh yeah? Well, I can see that. I don't think that any of us has been a huge fan of Spandau Ballet, but I like that tone,



Toronto was like 37,000, but most of the ones in the states have been ranging from 13,000 to 20,000. So it's not that big. Most of the ones in the states have reserved seating, which are kind of a downer for the first five bands because people can't go up close 'cause they don't have the reserved ticket. Most of the people are out in this field way beyond where the actual show is.

refer to that, I'll say 'vagina.'" She said, "It sounded like you were saying 'pussy' between the songs. 'Pussy, pussy, pussy.'" I said, "No, I'm an artsy fartsy guy. I say 'vagina' and 'breast.'" I couldn't figure out what she was talkin' about until later that I had bought this little Pocahontas doll named Percy. And we put it up on top of Mark's [Ibold, Pavement's bassist] amp because it sorta looks like him and it fell

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# DOES PAVEMENT KNOW?

By Noah Blumberg

that feeling, that airy feeling that they get, that synthesized feeling.

**AW:** Did the band have a specific reaction to Eazy E's death?

**SW:** Um, no. Not really. It's sad. It's too bad that it happens, but no, not at all. We never knew him. It's the same as Kurt Cobain's death. I never knew him personally and it's a shame that it had to happen, that both of them in different circumstances had to die so young, but that's life. It happens. I think what we get more upset over is when someone we know, like when The Replacements' guitar player died. That was something that we more mentioned amongst ourselves. We'd say, "Man, that sucks that it finally went downhill that far and he died." But to me that's more of just the pitfalls of life.

**AW:** Pavement has been covered by a lot of different bands. How do you guys react to that?

**SW:** Tindersticks did a cover of one of our songs. There's a few.

**AW:** I thought it was neat that The Wedding Present covered you guys.

**SW:** Yeah, it's great. It's just a compliment. When any band thinks that your songwriting is good enough to do their own version, it's nice. I haven't personally ever heard The Wedding Present's cover of "Box Elder," but the other guys who have heard it said that they didn't really like it that much. I think the Tindersticks did a good version of one of our songs here on the second stage. So I guess it's like 50-50. But any time another band thinks you're noteworthy enough to do their own version of your song, you've got to take it as a compliment.

**AW:** On your Lollapalooza set, is there anything out of the ordinary that you do? Do you concentrate on songs from a certain album or ...

**SW:** Well, we gave up on doing set lists. The first six shows were pretty awful. We weren't able to communicate with the crowd because of the seating thing. It was like we were playing to 10 people rather than 10,000 people because most of the

seats in front of you are empty. We decided to make everyone happy or at least some people happy. So we just discuss the next song and just get into it that way, or one guy who starts the song will just start it and everyone has to scramble to perform. That's been working out pretty well.

different set. Sometimes it's good, we have an upbeat set and sometimes we have songs that make it more mellow. It just depends on what you want to convey.

**AW:** How important is it to you guys to sell a lot of records?

**SW:** Obviously, it's not that important

right now is as high as I'd expect us ever to go. It's pretty unbelievable. You get a little frustrated with the pitfalls of being on a smaller label, realizing that your video because of that fact will not get played very much and that radio is gonna be pretty much shut to you if you don't play that big corporate game. That's kind of a downer, but if you just shake that off and try to make all your other business moves positive experiences and continue on, then doors should open for you in the future to enlarge your audience. That's a more comfortable pace. But no, it's obvious we're not tryin' to sell a lot of records. I just feel like there's always a certain percentage of people in every country who are really into music, music fans, and that's a relatively small percentage of the youthful percentage. Then you have the ones who listen to the radio and go to concerts every once in a while and enjoy it, but never really endeavor to go much farther. They'll maybe get an album because they heard the single on the radio. They'll listen to the album a couple times and enjoy it, but they won't go back and get the band's entire backlog. They're not thinking as a collector. It might just be a year for them that they were into that band and if you don't throw it in their face with publicity, then they'll kinda forget. You have to kinda remind 'em of a good performance.

**AW:** That's all I have. Anything you just wanted to say in general?

**SW:** We're looking forward to coming out there. There's two shows in L.A., I believe. I think they should be good. That's pretty high-energy stuff. We're gonna try to take on New York this week and see how that goes. L.A. is always much more interesting 'cause it's much more Hollywood. Do you know if it's a reserved and general seating place or if it's just like a field?

**AW:** I believe it's a big open area.

**SW:** Oh yeah? That should be good then.

**AW:** Well, good luck. Thanks a lot!



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There's only been a few mishaps, really visual and audible mix-ups going by that method. I kinda like it that way. Most of the bands have set lists, I'm pretty sure. We try to make every show a different one from the last one, trying to play a whole

or we would have gone to a major label about two years ago and done the whole thing. You know, we wanna have the music out there, but we're willing to take our time climbing that ladder of success. Really to me personally, where we are

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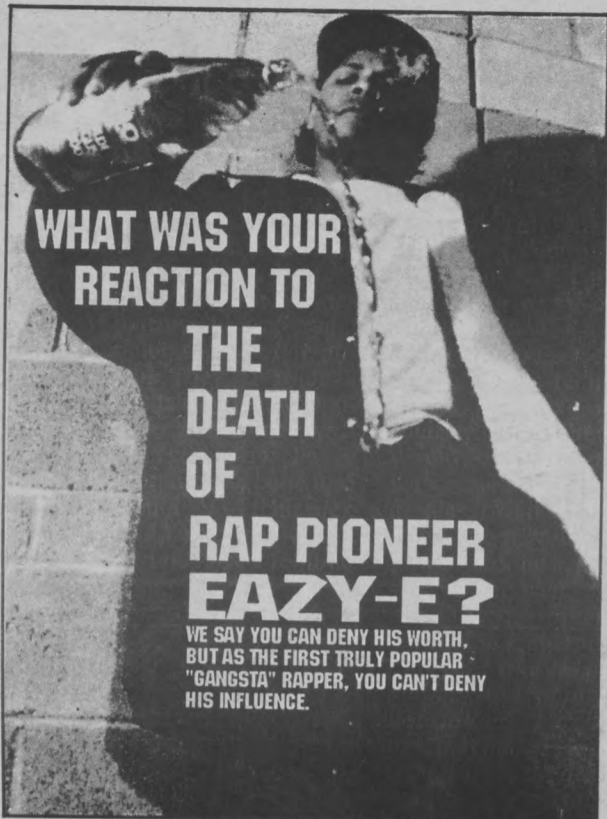
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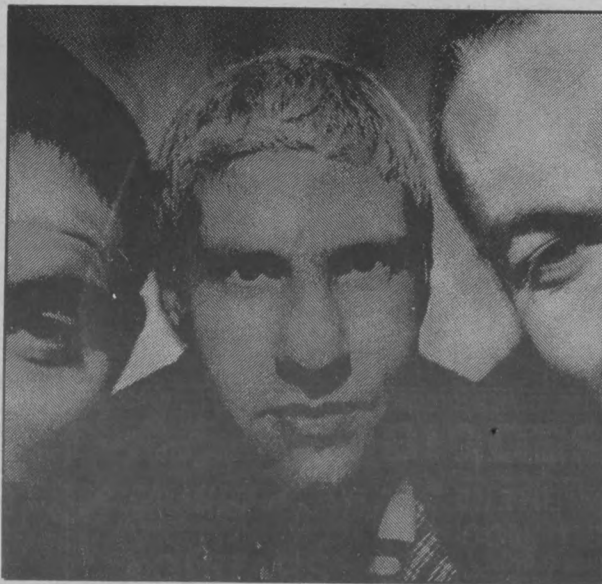
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**Mike D: I think I was sad.**



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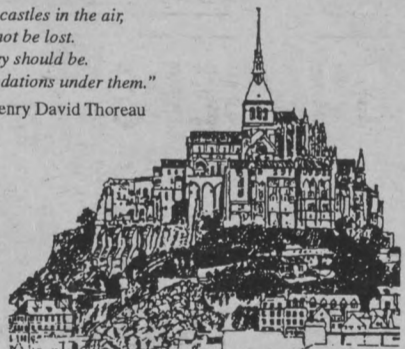
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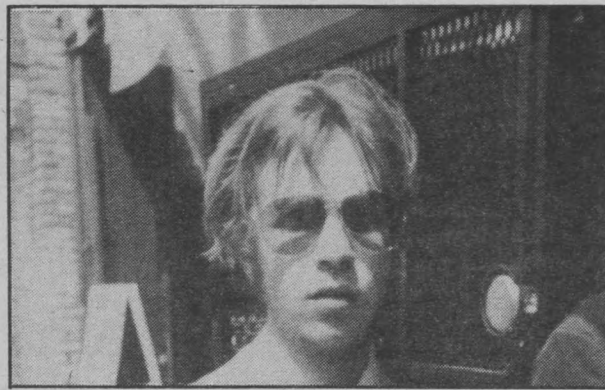
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**B-Real:** I was surprised, I didn't know he had that shit.

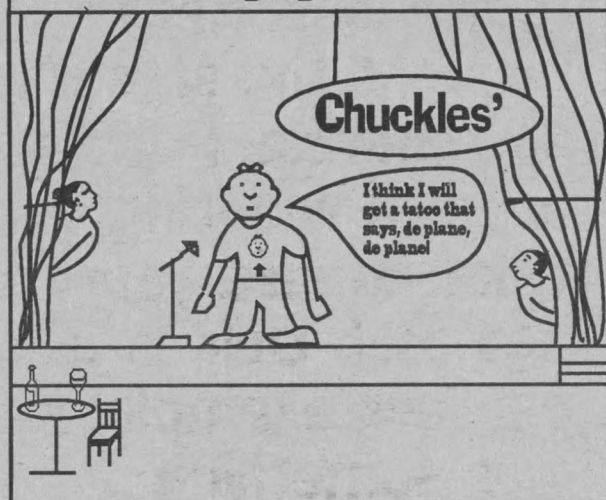


**Dickie:** It was a shock. I'm not the biggest rap fan in the world. I'm more into punk rock and ska music. I think it's a shame when anything like that happens.



**Beck:** One hard motherfucker took a walk on that long flat glass trail. He stumbled and stubbed his foot for the last time.

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