



CHRONICLE



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THE DEAD PLANTS

**FROM SCOTCH SHORTS
TO TEQUILA SHOTS**

It started off as a plan to leave our native Scotland, take the guitar and the doublebass with a whole bagfull of skiffle and rockabilly tunes to see where we ended up.

Dead Plants were born under a bare lightbulb in a Euston squat in November '92. There wasn't much light in the London music venues so you might have seen us busking down Brick Lane on a Sunday morning with Max on guitar: "Ere, Jock the Sock! Give us three pairs will ya?" or Portobello Road on a Saturday: "It's a dubbel bass. How much d'ya want for it?"

We got the van together outside the squat and sometimes outsider Weevil's (the brains behind an operation) would shout mechanical instructions out the window of his Tufnell Park gaff. Angry Ray was on hand demonstrating how to get into festivals: "We ARE the fuckin' band and were fuckin' comin' in!!"

Feeling suitably equipped it was time to leave the capital and the island in **search of musical adventure**, cheaper Merc parts and better busking coins. After setting off to Hamburg for a four date tour we ended up moving to Berlin. **Thriving on the nutrients of the toxic death-strip**, we put down roots beside the

Berlin Wall and spent the next two years on a white night musical blitz on the bars and falafel stalls of the city.

Live Review - December 11th, Berlin, Huxley's Neue Welt: Today we hit Berlin. Later on, Berlin hits us. We go to an all night punk rock party-gig. There's an undercurrent of violence due to the skinhead party going on in the same building. A huge graffitied squat. It's cool, though. A case of "I went to a fight and an excellent gig broke out." Saw a brilliant band called Dead Plants and a crap one called Blowdried Puke. Beer costs 1 mark (40p). Hashish is cheap and potent. We like Berlin.

With our base in East Berlin we travelled all over Europe playing, well, ANYWHERE. **Anywhere that would have us (and a few places that wouldn't).** Clubs, bars, restaurants, art galleries, weird parties in the woods, squats, weddings, street corners, doorways, down the alleys and on one occasion the women's toilet in a famous techno club. In July we recorded some songs in a former DDR youth centre and headed out to shake some leaves at festivals in Holland, Denmark, Czech Republic and Germany.

The lure of a fine cup of coffee and a gig in a warehouse outside Rome pulled us down the snowy Route Nationale and we ended up busking the Piazza della Rotonda (built by the Romans for us to play in). It was time to get in touch with the Italian music

mafia, these people know how to cook! Roma is a gas! Mutate with the Mutoid Waste Company. Then we went across the water (the Pacific) and immigration told Stanley where to get some new sneakers.

When the Bronx women started dancing the head of black music at SONY asked us to come visit him at his 23rd floor office in Times Square. **We didn't get no record deal but the view was good.** Jamming late night for the taxi drivers on Eighth Avenue with Bobby Lurie on drums. Polish Rosie let us play in her bar down by Tompkins Square and got the vodka out, refusing to play pool coz her legs were tired.

From NYC to San Francisco where the night porter knows a thing or two about Jazz and is a dead ringer for Gene Hackman. We were doing alright out west and **everything led to something new but Mexico was calling** and we had to get one of them Mariachi basses.

It turns out the Zona Rosa in Mexico City is one of the best pitches in El Mundo. In Ireland it wasn't long before we bumped into harmonica man Niall O'Carroll (about 25 minutes in fact). In 2001, after a gig at Clermont Ferrand's Cooperative de Mai, we made some friends and suddenly we were playing every two-bit bar in that volcanic town... **to be continued.**