

of Trash American Style (a record shop in Connecticut) took receipt of 40 boxes of indie 7"s – all new and indexed with short description labels – from the estate of a dealer based in Washington DC. Being one of the first to dive into this trove was a genuine thrill. Also, receiving in the post those super-limited Organum private releases, direct from the artist – that completely justified my faith in vinyl.

How do you track down stuff?

Sadly, time restrictions prevent browsing in shops and bin-diving nowadays. I usually buy direct from shops, dealers or labels and, of course, eBay (though I have drastically reduced my addiction to online auctions).

What's your favourite record shop?

In the UK it must be Record Museum in Southend, though I haven't been there for a long while. This is also possibly the smallest record shop in the UK. It always has great selections of rockabilly and rock'n'roll. In the US, it was the marvellous Trash American Style in Danbury, Connecticut. They were forced to close due to being screwed by a despicable landlord. Such a shame. Aquarius Records in San Francisco, California, has to be up there as well – always an outstanding selection, though I have yet to visit the actual bricks-and-mortar store.

How often do you listen to the stuff in your collection?

Almost every day. I rip my vinyl onto compilation CDs to play in the car and at work. At home I have to play my records via Stax headphones: thin walls and even thinner-skinned neighbours means I can't play what I want as loud as I might want to and when I

want (goddamit, I'm in America, don't I have rights ...?). How my neighbours cannot adore the delicate refrains and lilting melodies of The New Blockaders & Organum or the hard acid-techno pounding of The Pump Panel is beyond me!

Is there a visual side to collecting for you?

Completely. Les Joyaux De La Princesse set the gold standard with packaging. Their *Absinthe 2-10"* box set (with Blood Axis) is a tour de force of visual delight and extravagance. It even comes with a specially-made absinthe spoon. The music is outstanding too. Early 70s Hawkwind sleeves were all tremendous. The fold-out "CHAOS" shield sleeve from *Warrior On The Edge Of Time* is, in my opinion, definitive and conclusive proof of vinyl's superiority over CD. No need to get into any extensive discussions about sound quality and all that waffle. That's my argument, anyway.

How do you think you'll eventually dispose of your collection?

I'll flog them somehow and donate the proceeds to The Cats Protection League.

What's your all-time favourite record, regardless of rarity?

The pinnacle of human musical achievement is, and will probably always remain, Beethoven's Ninth. But my own personal favourites are easy to state: Hawkwind's *Warrior On The Edge Of Time* and Throbbing Gristle's *Second Annual Report* (I wore out my first copy). My all-time favourite single piece of music ever is, without doubt, Pink Floyd's 1972 *Live At Pompeii* rendition of Set The Controls For The Heart For The Sun – to me it's mythic, epic, ageless. Simply awe-inspiring and glorious.



Photo Credit: Alan Humphreys