



August 19, 2019

THIS TOWN IS FULL OF GHOSTS: Missoula's Underground Music, 1960s – 2000s

Deranged Diction. Initial Shock. Ein Heit. These were some of the bands that haunted Missoula's music venues over the years. A slice of that music history will be on display this year at the River City Roots Festival in a pop-up exhibit, featuring two tents and a telephone pole displaying concert flyers, newspaper clippings, photos, magazines, album covers and other ephemera. The exhibit, *This Town is Full of Ghosts*, focuses on a few key bands from the Top Hat, Jay's Upstairs and the Badlander between 1960 and the early 2000s. It heavily spotlights Missoula's vibrant and storied underground punk scene in the 1980s and 1990s centered on Jay's Upstairs.

The artifacts will provide a sketch of Missoula's intriguing music past, from psychedelic bands such as Initial Shock (which featured the late owner of the Top Hat Steve Garr) to punk outfits such as Just Ducky, started by now-famous producer and Hellgate High School alumnus Steve Albini; and Deranged Diction, Pearl Jam bass player Jeff Ament's first band. It offers a peek into the rise of the electronic music scene, which began at a house in the lower Rattlesnake called The Badlander before becoming the name of a major downtown music space.

This Town is Full of Ghosts is the first step in a larger project on Missoula's music history that will be developed into a larger exhibit and incorporated into walking tours.

Collaborators include the Downtown Missoula Partnership and Unseen Missoula walking tours, Missoula Historic Preservation Commission, Jimmy Grant of Historical Research Associates, historian Leif Fredrickson's University of Montana class "Exploring Public History," and Dave Marten's Lost Sounds Montana project. The exhibit will also call attention to the development of the Downtown Heritage Interpretative Plan for Missoula, part of the Downtown Master Plan, which will include aspects of Missoula's arts and music history.

More than 25 artists from the Pacific Northwest participating in this year's Art Show, will feature paintings, photography, pottery, sculptures, jewelry, and textile art, all front and center on Main Street during both days of the festival from 11 am to 7 pm on Friday, Aug. 23 and Saturday, Aug. 24. This component of River City Roots Fest creates an all-around experience for those who appreciate fine arts, both visually and musically.

For more information about the exhibit, please contact Leif Fredrickson at leif.fredrickson@gmail.com and for more information about the River City Roots Festival Art Show, please contact Lincoln Mansch at lincoln@missouladowntown.com.

Downtown Missoula: Connecting Our Community!

