

SONIC YOUTH

The band is in nucleus formation:

Thurston Moore - guitar, vocals
Kim Gordon - bass, guitar, vocals
Lee Ranaldo - guitar vocals
Steve Shelley - drums

Their new CD is called ***RATHER RIPPED***
Release date: June 13, 2006

1981/82/83 (*Noise Fest, 1st mini-LP, Confusion Is Sex, Kill Yr Idols, Sonic Death*):

The group began in 1981 downtown New York City with this line-up: Thurston Moore, Kim Gordon, Lee Ranaldo and Richard Edson on drums. Ann Demarinis, keyboards, played early on for a very short bit and is documented on the first recorded appearance of the band on the Noise Fest cassette released by ZG Magazine in 1982. The Noise Fest was at a NYC art gallery where Thurston curated 9 days of experimental rock music. After Anne left, Lee joined. This is the band that made the 1st eponymously titled mini-LP released in 1982 by Neutral Records, a label founded by NYC guitar/composer Glen Branca. Richard then ran away to be a movie star.

Lee and Thurston awoke in 1976/77 NYC to CBGB/Max's firestorm: Television, Patti Smith, Suicide, Ramones, etc. - Kim was in L.A. studying as a visual artist living down the block from a young Darby Crash and Germs rehearsals. She came to NYC, met up with Thurston and they started playing during the era (1978/79) dubbed *no wave*. They joined forces with Lee. With cheap guitars tuned to various hot rodded tunings they wrote songs. Richard Edson left to be replaced by Bob Bert, and for an interim, Jim Scavunos. These drummers helped record the 1983 lp "*Confusion Is Sex*" again on Neutral.

Black Flag, The Minutemen, Meat Puppets and Butthole Surfers became contemporaries and Sonic Youth bought a van and crashed around the USA all through the 1980s playing in front of small, completely freaked out, audiences.

Bob Bert toured with the band as it traaveled through Europe throughout early 1983. They released an EP called "*Kill Yr Idols*" only in Germany (Zensor Records) and from the Euro tour a self-released cassette titled "*Sonic Death*" (Ecstatic Peace, Thurston's own label, which he still maintains)

1984/85/86: (*Bad Moon Rising, Flower/Halloween, Evol*)

After sending tapes to specific independent record labels (remember, at this time there weren't many dealing with underground music as such, and most of them seemed to reside in the U.K.)--they got a call from Blast First - a new label in London who had been dealing with Lydia Lunch - who Thurston had been playing with in a band called In Limbo (also featuring Richard Edson-drums and Jim Sclavunos-sax). They recorded the "*Bad Moon Rising*" LP and Blast First released it. Gerard Cosloy, who had interest in the band, started work at a label in the U.S. called Homestead and released it statewide. They also released a 12" entitled "*Flower/Halloween*"----- they went to London and destroyed. At that point the U.K. scene was touting the death of the electric guitar and Sonic Youth, in a New York minute, wiped that concept out. They encouraged Blast First to bring over Big Black and the Butthole Surfers to further the explosion of recognition for the new U.S. underground. Things have not been the same since.

Upon return to the U.S. from the 1984 touring Bob Bert up and left (later to join post-SY noise freaksters Pussy Galore). Steve Shelley, from Michigan, was asked to join after sending cassettes of his bands the Crucifucks and Spastic Rhythm Tarts to Thurston. Lee and Thurston saw Steve play a hardcore matinee at CBGB with the Crucifucks and knew he was the choice.

Black Flag had a label called SST in L.A. and in the mid '80s this was considered the premier vanguard of underground, independent music being made in the USA. SST signed Sonic Youth in 1986, who left Homestead but stayed with Blast First for the U.K. and Europe.-- Sonic Youth recorded "*Evol*" expanding on their dusted, mesa-boogie explorations of the American landscape and all it's mysteries. At this time the Sub Pop label included SY's "*Kill Yr Idols*" track on it's prescient *Sub Pop 100* compilation.

1987/88/89: (*Sister, The White(y) Album, Daydream Nation*)

In 1987 they recorded "*Sister*" - this LP touched on themes of hyper-irreality and dislocation.

After touring non-stop they stopped and decided to leave SST for a record deal with Enigma (now defunct) and recorded "*The White(y) Album*" under the aegis of Ciccone Youth - an idea borne from the fact of Madonna, who at one point was making out with a friend of theirs to becoming a superstar on the cover of Time magazine. It was an effort to create music that was completely studio based and skullfucked. Mike Watt, while sitting in on the "*Evol*" sessions, helped formulate the idea recording a cover version of Madonna's "*Burning Up*" while Ciccone Youth recorded "*Into The Groove*" (as "*Into The Groove(y)*")---that was where the Madonna flirtation ended (save for the cover art) and the rest of the session was complete out/machine groove/psyche.

Sonic Youth then recorded "*Daydream Nation*" a double lp which encapsulated all that had been brewing musically and lyrically with the band through the 1980s. They toured incessantly round the globe, even doing a run through the Soviet Union.

At decade's end they departed company with Blast First and Enigma and signed to a major label, Geffen. This was considered insane by many on watch as there was really no history of independent underground bands, besides maybe REM, succeeding within the realms of the corporate music industry which they helped build an alternative to.

1990/91/92: (*Goo, Dirty, TV Shit*)

They released the LP "*Goo*" in 1990 and spent that summer blasting across America with Neil Young and Crazy Horse on the *Ragged Glory* tour. With "alternative rock" and "grunge" sweeping the nation (Nirvana sold a zillion records and the industry was a new deal----sort of) SY recorded "*Dirty*" in 1992 and raged globally on the Pretty Fucking Dirty tour from whence the live *TV Shit 12*" (featuring Eye of the Boredoms) on Ecstatic Peace came from.

1993/94/95: (*Experimental Jet Set, Trash And No Star*)

SY toured and toured and in 1994 they released the odd and rather zapped LP "*Experimental Jet Set, Trash And No Star*"

In 1995 they headlined Lollapalooza and toured with REM.

1996/97/98: (*Washing Machine, A Thousand Leaves, SYR 1, 2 + 3, Silver Session (for Jason Knuth)*)

In 1996 they released "*Washing Machine*" recorded in the deep south of Memphis, Tennessee.

In 1997 SY built a studio, played the Tibetan Freedom Festival for the 2nd year running and recorded soundtrack music for Richard Linklater and Eric Bogosian's *Suburbia* film. They also recorded a series of EPs on their own homegrown label SYR (*Anagrama, Slaapkamers met Slagroom, and Invito al Cielo*). This music was extrapolated, mostly instrumental forays into wild improvisatory meditations and sub/conscious structural creations. This work helped develop the 1998 lp "*A Thousand Leaves*" as well as the "*Silver Session*" (for Jason Knuth) CD in benefit to suicide prevention awareness.

1999-2004: (*NYC Ghosts & Flowers, Goodbye 20th Century, Murray Street, Sonic Nurse*)

In the summer of 1999 SY were liberated from all the signature sound tools they developed for the last 12 years or so. They came home and picked up hammers + nails and started afresh writing the LP entitled "*NYC Ghosts & Flowers*."

Jim O'Rourke helped out on that LP and actually toured with SY during this time. With additional input from Bay Area percussionist William Winant the band recorded an homage to an array of 20th Century new music composers (John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, Christian Wolff, Takehisa Kosugi, Yoko Ono, Steve Rich and others) entitled "*Goodbye 20th Century*" released on their own SYR imprint. This expanded line up toured playing these pieces across Europe. Jim continued working with the band participating in the writing/arranging of the subsequent "*Murray Street*" LP as well as recording music for Olivier Assayas' *Demonlover* film- all amidst the ruined landscape

of the World Trade Center. They curated the first stateside All Tomorrow's Parties festival in L.A. spring 2002 and toured hard throughout the summer. The band regrouped for 2003's Coachella Festival and did a short tour with Wilco. They then finished the summer off doing a handful of gigs with, and by invitation of, Iggy & the Stooges. Injected with fire they cut "*Sonic Nurse*", a motherfucker of an LP released June 2004.

2005 – 2006: (Rather Ripped)

2005 had SY revisiting awesome Japan, touring the boroughs of New York, rollicking at the first Arthurfest in L.A., and releasing the special deluxe edition of GOO. After one final gnarl out in Brazil w/ Flaming Lips, The Stooges and others Mr. Jim O'Rourke decided to concentrate full-time on his Japanese studies of language and film and SY was subsequently back to it's OG nucleus of Kim-Thurston-Lee-Steve. Songs were written, Jim recommended engineer TJ Doherty and J Mascis (Dinosaur Jr) recommended mix engineer John Agnello and SY created the oddly titled "*Rather Ripped*". The whole deal was recorded in the waning hours of 2005 into the dawn sunshine of 2006 at the venerable Sear Sound studios in NYC's fading theatre district. Partially mixed there and at Hoboken, NJ's Water Music by the golden juice ear of John Agnello it exhibits SY in positive vibration mode. 12 songs of forward motion and harmonic/melodic surprise. Vocals shared by the frontline of Thurston, Kim and Lee with Steve groove gluing the rhythms into rock n roll infection.

They bust out o' the sonic barn with ***Incinerate*** and ***Reena*** then contemplate holy war mind games with ***Do You Believe in Rapture?*** and keep cruising strong with track after track of risk-laden rock jammers until floating out with the curious ***Or***.

This is a straight-up Sonic Youth field on fire, with a compact potency of rock n roll enlightenment. Rather ripped, indeed.

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