

OXBOW / Tour Diary / Europe: 1995 (Eugene)

We're picked up by Manuel, the tour promoter from Splatter Promotion. Tom, our drummer sniffs cautiously and says 'Manuel the German'? That sounds about as legit as 'Ivan the Spaniard!' Much to Manuel the Swiss' consternation we call him Ivan for the remainder of the tour. They take us out to meet the intrepid traveler Tomas Venker who when we last saw him was crouched over the dying body of our drug addict video guy Karl in San Francisco. He looks about the same. Tomas, not the drug addict video guy who is now, rest his soul, dead. We meet Tomas at this horrible looking concrete building in Stuttgart...it looks like a fucking commie jail with its piss-colored, yellowing windows and soot-stained concrete. He says its his school. We ask, 'what's it a school of?' He says 'Architecture.' Absolute genius.

Tubingen

Notable because it sounds like another name I might give to my dick. I'm attempting to learn how to say suck my Tubingen in Germany as I feel this will come in quite handy in German speaking countries. Anyways 5 bands on the bill...we step into the backstage area where this rather brash young strumpet says to me 'What is your name?' I say 'Eugene.' She begins calling me 'Bluegene.' I am annoyed not visibly so however. She is in one of the opening bands, speaking of which...we've been staying with Markus from Die Funf Probleme...he's a beautiful cat, really, and I have much love in my heart for him and must thank him for the copious amounts of food, as well as the beautiful hair care products that I used liberally on my modified Little Walter Konk.

The bands that play before us are cool and the girl from the opening band that calls me Bluegene now still calls me Bluegene but rather than continuing annoyance I now feel a wholly new sensation and it comes from the crotch area.

We play after this band that has a real healthy Russ Meyer fixation...they treat us like they think we suck though we have yet to play...even on jetlag, drugaddled low energy I think we can give a halfway decent show.....And we do...Micho announces us and we play. It is good. People yell 'Kill Kill' at us during the show...I'm not sure if this is what they wanted us to do or what they wanted to do to us.

The day after in Stuttgart we see some of the world's oldest hookers. Worth the price of admission alone. Also: NOBODY in Europe smokes more than the Germans and of this they should be proud.

Nijmegen

We can't pronounce it but we figure it must exist because of the road signs. We get to meet Fred from Brinkman records, the label that puts out our shit in The Netherlands. The Dutch have to be the healthiest and most beautiful people in Europe but their

incredibly weird fucking language has made them much more arrogant than they need to have been. Plus they seem to be still smarting over the Dutch fall from grace as a world power and their current relegation to the status of wacky clog dancing, tulip growing, windmill tending people who are too ignorant to build their houses ABOVE sea level. We're admittedly a little bitter as the Dutch chose to not sleep with ANY of us. Fred takes us out to dinner and I, in full asshole fashion, order the most expensive thing on the menu...it's a meat dish with meat. Fred, a guy who seems like he NEVER gets angry, smiles at me (who seem like I'm ALWAYS angry)...

At our show the woman doing stage sound comes up after the gig and complains to Niko: Your singer showed his penis....I wanted to stay and keep doing my job but he kept showing me....I wanted to flee the penis, I was disgusted. Niko tells her that he understands her confusion at the sight of my penis and wonders that it's strange that no one else in the entire club had a problem with the penis. She then tries to kiss Niko...these wacky Dutch.

France

The old children's nursery rhyme from Brooklyn where I grew up had quite a bit to say about the girls in France and how they spent their time doing the hula-hula dance and didn't wear any underpants. I found these all to be falsehoods. We're playing in a place named Rennes and though the French have gotten a bad international reputation I found them to be great people and the food (since I'm a big 255 pound/124 kilo kind of guy this matters to me) is REALLY fucking good. The guitar player from the band opening for us, The Naval Cut Cord, comes up to me prior to our show and says that he thinks his band should headline because they've got an extensive stage setup. I tell him to talk to Manuel Ivan who we now call Mr. Brompton. I understand his shorthand and it is: we're great, you suck, let us headline. I want to tell him that in a couple of hours he'll have a different opinion but screw it. Mr. Brompton tells him no and that's that.



We play a great show: Niko bloodies his nose, I almost break my leg (and will have to tape it for the rest of the tour), Tom breaks all of his sticks and Dan stays as smooth as ever. Scott, one of my best friends, came along with us from Paris where he lives and sells a shitload of our t-shirts and speaks the language like a native. After the show the opening band comes up and apologizes. That's cool. They're cool. We get interviewed by this guy from Sonic magazine and we all fall deeply and soulfully in love with his girlfriend who brings us dinner.

Thiers

Great place, great show. Most noteworthy: the French guy who to show his appreciation at our show vomited up a stomach full of red wine at will three times to show his great appreciation.

Switzerland

We pull into Switzerland after making the border crossing and I m starting to feel like Morrissey as it rains pretty constantly. Tom has been working on a new Morrissey tune which I'm sure the man himself would like called 'I Fell Off My Bicycle and Lay on the Ground for a Very, Very Long Time.' We're playing in a place call Luzern at a club call Sedel. Some of the Oxbow posters have the dicks cut out of them. I don't know whether this means people were taking the dicks home or that people were throwing them out... it all seems to point to a deeply disturbed national pysche. The guys putting on the show are very cool and we hang out at their house listening to the Young Gods and napping, talking, eating. I miss almost every single girl that's ever loved me and tonight's show will probably be a weird reflection of that. Love and rage and longing...I don't feel like I'll ever be a member of the human race again.

We play and I smash bottles all over the stage and there's broken glass everywhere and water and juice and beer and I start to lose it a few times...no wonder the Swiss suicide rate is so high...a little fucking sunshine would help this country immeasurably. We finish and stay in an old farmhouse with about three guys named Thomas (one with the incredibly fortunate last name, Kiss, which has got to be good for seducing someone).

St. Gallen

We stay in this old apartment building with this very groovy lady and her apartment was gayly festooned with love beads and tie-dyed stuff and pagan symbols and talismans and she was very quiet and a little spooky. When we leave her place the next day she gives us all beads, which we all do actually carry with us for the rest of the tour for good luck (despite my wise ass remark that they'd come in real handy when I got back to earth). The show is okay but we've taken notice of the fact that since we've been in Europe the only people to talk to us have been like people connected to the shows. We start to wonder 'why' people seem to be afraid of us. Some European guy says it's because the Swiss are so reserved that things like nudity make them uncomfortable...a nation of people that fuck in the dark.

Austria

Great, scary, colossal...everything I expected Germany to be actually. Hitler was Austrian and when we listen to the radio on the way to the show everybody sounds like Hitler to us. Big black eagles and carved sculptures of vultures and mountain castles...it is a wild fucking country.

I want to take some acid but decide this country might want to keep me a permanent psychic visitor.

We do a radio show and talk about the gig. It is desired on radio shows and in magazines like this one that you display a certain modicum of wit and easy-going personality but the reality of it is that the most coherent expression of who it is that we are comes across in either the live show or the recorded product and while we might actually BE witty and easy-going on occasion that has very little to do with where we really are with our music. Some interviewer said, you seem so normal in real life but onstage you're really different, are you acting onstage? I told him the only acting I was doing was the interview I was doing with him and there we were ACTING like we like being interviewed and his bullshit attempt to find out what we were really like was doomed to fail because we're much bigger assholes than we feel comfortable letting people know we are. Anyway, the interview ended and we went to the club.

The show was at this club under the street and looked like Trent Reznor's bedroom (schlafzimmer) and the club slowly filled as we played. No opening bands just us. It was a good show. Nobody got physically hurt and people seemed to groove on what we were doing. After the show this woman, Dagmar came up to me and asked me about my penis...do you view it as a weapon? she asked. We start talking about how my penis is really just a symbol for my penis...the cause and the cure for all of my life's great difficulties and the key to the mysteries of love. Her boyfriend comes up starts yammering at her in German and stalks off. She tells me he doesn't understand her. We try to meet at a bar later on but we get lost in wonderful Vienna, it rains, and then we're lost walking in the rain and looking at the hookers who have chosen a really hard way to make money and don't get to bed until 5 in the morning.

Wels

This band from NY opens for us. They're touring through Europe in a car picking up shows as they go. We leave them huddled around the food tray talking quietly. When we return they're involved in a full blown fistfight, stopping only briefly as we enter. 'Fuck you, fuck you, fuck you, fuck you...' 'I know you like me but is that all you can say?' 'FUCK YOU!!!' They leave. They play and are not as horrible as their earlier behavior might have indicated. We play and the crowd likes us. Back to Germany.

Berlin

Cool place. Good bands. The promoter who declares we are 'vollgeil' which could mean just about anything to me.

We are interviewed by two or three different magazines and I am asked 2 or 3 times if I like to fuck white women...and only once was this question asked BY a white woman.

I asked them what their grandparents did during the war and this seemed to quiet down their race interrogation down a bit. After the show the promoter takes me and Ivan Manuel to the top of this tower and talks to us for about 20 minutes about life, his favorite bands, his club and grabbing my hand begs us to come back. I tell him we definitely will and wonder briefly if he's going to try and kill me on the way back down.

Hannover

Another great place. We stay with some great people and put on a good show and have a great West Indian meal cooked by their West Indian cook.

Horst

Back in Holland. The show is at this small community center and by the sight of all the spiky mohawks I know they re going to get something they don't expect...and they do...they get us.

Hildesheim

We record a cut for a split 7-inch with the dearly departed H-Oilers. We try to get over to the Scorpions hometown but it's no go. We do get to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and whilst walking through it Tom is waxing philosophical and saying that isn't it good that we actually seem to be beyond this kind of barbarity (strangely optimistic for Tom) and right at that point the US military base starts having artillery and heavy machine gun trials a few hundred yards away. Tom says fuck this world and busies himself with trying to pick up the girls from some youth group on a field trip. I think his mood was ruined by the reminder that we are still fucking animals. Waiting until he finds out that I shit in his lunch bag. We record this song Brujita for the 7 inch with this guy Stefan. It sounds good. We leave.

Hamburg

This is the city that destroyed Pete Best, the Beatles former drummer. The club has refused to put our Big Dick Oxbow poster up, so the show has no publicity AND we are competing with our homestate friends Crash Worship AND Dick Dale. With no publicity and that kind of competition we are fucked.

We play to about 40 people and though we play well we want to kill the promoter.

They charge us a 19% unification tax as well so we leave Hamburg with our anuses feeling a little raw and used.

Basel

Greg from Plainfield cooks us a big ass breakfast (fruhstuck) with steaks and eggs and sausage and melons and potatoes and I love the guy for doing this. I shit like a cannon straight up to show time. We stay at Manuel's place and having a room alone I jerk off like I just discovered my dick. The show is good. And we're off to Bern.

Bern

Her: Most women like to kind of KNOW a guy a little before we see his penis.

Niko: Oh.

Another penis problem town...the only women having a problem with it are curiously from San Francisco though...strange and a little pre-DICK-table....I should stop while I'm ahead.

Schwenningen

I love this fucking place place. Tomas, Markus and the very tall guy from Stuttgart who's name I can't remember now come to this show. The folks from Visions magazine (they're sponsoring the tour) are there as well. We play well...the audience is very, uh, INVOLVED in the show from the women making out with each other up front to the men making out with each other up front to the guy's whose head I played the fucking bongos on to Toni Schifer, promoter and Crippled Dick label guy, who earns the prize for the Big Ugly American Laugh of the Night when he, looking for the switch to turn off the house lights says to us, sounding like Arnold Schwarzenegger, 'Der ist no MAA-STER POW-AH!' We are still laughing. He is a great guy and can only guess at the amusement he afforded us.

Nurnberg

Next to last show.

We all fall madly and deeply in love with the barmaid at the LGB club where we played.

We agree to fight each other for her. I guiltily take her picture as we leave and secretly masturbate to it.

Belgium

This country has perpetrated a mass fraud on the rest of the world and I'm highly pissed off at my complete inability to find BELGIAN WAFFLES. FUCK THIS FUCKING COUNTRY. We go to a restaurant and the waiter spends 10 fucking minutes describing the things to me and when I ask for one he says 'we don't have any now...maybe later.' THAT'S WHY THE REST OF THE WORLD HATES YOU BELGES....Now that I think of it I couldn't get a frankfurter in Frankfurt, a hamburger in Hamburg, French Fries in France or Swiss cheese in Switzerland....we know the rest of the world LAUGHS at Americans but just wait until you come here and try to get a Denver Omeletter....haha, you're fucked friends. Oh yeah, the show was good.

Amsterdam

We left your beautiful lives and came back to ours and six months later we're working on our new record and looking forward to shitting on all of your sidewalks again next spring.