

**00:00:07**

FRANK BRIDGES: Welcome. Thanks for coming. This is our first event. I guess it's a panel for the New Brunswick Music Scene Archive. I'm Frank Bridges. I'm going to help guide our idea is a discussion tonight. We'll have folks at the table talking together. They quite seem to know each other so that's fantastic. It's almost like a reunion and then we're going to do a Q & A which it seems like that's also going to be a reunion which is exciting. So, we don't quite exactly know what's going to happen, but

**00:00:38**

it's going to happen and it's being recorded, but only I think this portion. So, no one should freak out too much. Some I am Frank Bridges. I'm a Ph.D. candidate over at the School of Communication and Information. My dissertation is going to be on the New Brunswick music scene and as a pocket of resistance to the decline of vinyl which that's kind of the long thing. But I was also involved in the music scene in the early 90s. I had a label. I

**00:01:08**

was in a couple bands. I was in RSU at the radio station and had done some other things as well too. As it seems like probably about 80 percent of the audience has as well too and I think the panel too. So, we seem to our lives are swinging around here. First, I want to introduce Christine. So, I had thought it would be nice if I could take some of my stuff and maybe start an archive or something and I wondered if other people were thinking the same

**00:01:38**

thing. As I started talking to people, lo and behold, everyone had their plastic Tupperware bin of stuff either in the attic or in the basement. Attic is probably a better place keep it, just in case, and in a plastic bin. That's a lot better than a cardboard box as well. I started talking to people and they had their own stuff too. So, they're like yeah, it'd be great to kind of put all of this stuff together. I'd heard that the D.C. Punk Archive had started about a year

**00:02:08**

ago. It was like about a year ago and I was like that's it. That's what we need to do. So, I was starting to talk to people at the library and I met Christine Lutz who was working in Special Collections. She also has ties to the New Brunswick music scene and like this is a good idea. This is an area that she works and she was like, let's do it. I'm going to let her talk about the archive and kind of what we're thinking from like the library standpoint because it's still in this flux as we build it and put it together. CHRISTINE LUTZ: Hi.

**00:02:46**

As Frank said I'm Christy Lutz I'm the New Jersey Studies Librarian here downstairs in Special Collections and University Archives. Part of my job is to document stuff that's going on in New Jersey and collect material on it. Like Frank said, I have my own interest in the New Brunswick scene. I did not go to Rutgers, but you know I lived with enough people or went to enough shows that I

**00:03:16**

felt sort of at least on the periphery of the scene and had that interest in the music. I've also been a college DJ at another state institution and I've just been around a lot of people who were sort of collecting set lists and flyers and whatnot. So, I think this is always kind of in the back of my mind. Then as we said the DC Punk Archive came along and that was a real inspiration for me. They've

**00:03:46**

been super helpful sort of guiding us a little bit but we are very much feeling this out as we go. I am collecting your printed material and thank you to those of you who already dropped some stuff off. It's an awesome start. So, flyers and photos and various media, ticket stubs, zines, whatever you have, I'm more than happy to take and keep spreading the word that this

**00:04:16**

is happening. We want to preserve this stuff. We want to preserve the scene, preserve a history of the scene but we also want to make it accessible to people. The collection, as it builds, will be open to the public to come in and take a look at and we'll do some promotions so people can find it. It's just really important that we have access to this history, that we in the library are engaged with the New Brunswick community

**00:04:47**

around us. This is just one of a bunch of community engagement projects that we're working on in the libraries currently. This is my favorite, but I'm biased. So, I'll just add if you have any questions about the archive, you have stuff, you're not sure if it's the right fit please talk to me. I have business cards on the table. Talk to Frank and we're happy to hear what you have. We want to do more events as the archive grows to

**00:05:17**

where there's lots of other people to hear from. We'd love to do an exhibit once we have a substantial amount of stuff. I would love to have maybe a library basement show, that would be awesome. So, we've got lots of ideas. If you have any ideas please let us know. Is there anything key that I'm missing? But thank you for coming. Yes. We need to thank some people. I've gotten a lot of

**00:05:48**

help with this tonight. Some of my colleagues down in Special Collections who are outside taking donations and making you sign your name. Tara Maharjan, Flora Boros, and Sheridan Sales, thank you and thank you panel. We'll be thanking you all night probably. We're going to thank James Hodges who will help facilitate the Q & A in a bit. The

**00:06:18**

DSA. we are going to have a reception afterward. So, the SCI, School of Communication and Information Doctoral Student Association, helped pay for that along with Marie Radford who is the Ph.D. Director as well. So, we hadn't quite thought about how we're going to do this. I don't know if anyone's picked up on that. We're going to get to the panel. We will definitely get to the panel. Our idea was to have them bring something today so like a show-and-tell to kind of get the conversation going. Then

**00:06:49**

we wanted to float out some questions and we'll see kind of what happens, but we're really hoping more for the dialogue to happen amongst them again, as it relates to the New Brunswick music scene which can really be anything. We had been going to Hidden Grounds thinking about a panel. We had a laundry list of people that would have been great. We really wanted to have a nice mix and we kind of came upon these four people. We were like, this would be great. Hopefully they'll say yes if not

**00:07:19**

okay. We went one by one and we hit them one by one and then we needed the musician. We were like, Marissa is going to be great for that and then lo and behold she was actually in Hidden Grounds, but she would look like she was signing some stuff for somebody. So, then that felt weird like hey we got another question for you. So, we did that through the proper chains of email and stuff like that. Instead of me introducing you we're just going to get right to it if that's OK or we'll just go down the line. We'll have each panelist introduce

**00:07:49**

themselves talk, about their thing and we'll take the conversation from there. I'm going to sit here and then we'll just see what happens and what our dialogue will float some questions out that we've been thinking about. Let's just start it from there. **MARISSA:** I am Marissa.

**00:08:29**

I play in a band called Screaming Females. I lived in New Brunswick for about a decade-ish. Well, I lived in Highland Park. You guys get it and my band Screaming Females started and New Brunswick in 2005 and we are still a band and that's basically it. My piece of ephemera. I'll just pick what's on the top. Was anyone

**00:09:00**

in New Brunswick when we had the festival three-day weekend? Yeah it was a good weekend. So here is a flyer for one of the day-shows that was at my house Courtland Land. Called Courtland Land because it was the house on Cortland Street. I made up the name. It's cool. Featuring a lot of really strange bands who were kind of visiting at the time. One local called Tin Kitchen who kind of like an emo-e (sp) band. Then

**00:09:31**

one band that kind of played quite often called We Are the Seahorses, who would usually play at my house, which consisted of two members and then the lead singer. It was three guys. The lead singer was this guy Darren Mabee who is now a regular on a public access television show called The Special Without Brett Davis. I don't know if anybody watches that. It's another New Jersey-pertinent thing. Darren used to always take all his clothes off

**00:10:01**

and then cover himself in glitter and they played like every week basically and would destroy the basement until it was like completely covered in confetti and glitter and like fluids that were unidentifiable. The basement became like this foreboding place that nobody ever wanted to go into because it was really disgusting and smelled weird. He also, one time when We Are the Seahorses were playing, he went upstairs mid-set and decided to take a shower and then he came back down wearing a towel. It was very strange

**00:10:32**

but anyway, this was like a day show that we had during the three-day weekend which the drummer in Screaming Females organized. It was basically like a DIY all ages, 3-day festival in which like each day a New Brunswick band would headline and then we raised money by putting out a zine, like you do with your yearbook at school, like putting on a zine and getting ads taken out in the zine. We used that money and ticket money to pay the traveling bands that came through. So, a

**00:11:02**

New York band was still considered like a traveling band, so we had Cheeky come, we had Double Dagger from Baltimore, Maryland come, Prizzy Prizzy Please from Bloomington, Indiana came. We had had one of the shows in a place called The Loft which was a loft on Sanford and then two of the shows were at Yoga Vayu which used to be on George Street by the Subway. So,

**00:11:34**

it was really important that the shows were all ages and accessible to everybody that was like a big part of our lives and playing music together. It was awesome. We didn't get any help from the city. We didn't get any help from Rutgers and we just did it ourselves and it was a really fun weekend and of the town. JOSEPH STEINHART: I'm Joe Steinhart. I run a record

**00:12:04**

label called Don Giovanni Records which is based out of New Brunswick, but I am not based out of New Brunswick anymore, so it's a little confusing because there's not actually a label home, but the label is still based out of New Brunswick. I brought a stack of classic New Brunswick seven- inches that were sort of the inspiration almost for why I wanted to start the record label. I brought a Degenerix. So, these are all sort of from the era when I first got into New Brunswick music that is. They're really representative of. JIM TESTA: Some of them could be my records though. JOSEPH STEINHART: No, these



**00:12:35**

are all ones that I bought. So that's why I'm saying. These aren't old records. These aren't new records, used ones. Some of these are not first pressings. This is like the second pressing in this Degenerix seven-inch, but this is the one that was around when I first bought it. I have Worthless, Revenge of Dr. Stanley, put out by one of the men at the table over here. We got a Fan Shen. This is actually a test pressing because I couldn't figure out where I put my actual seven-inch, which I was probably listening to it. We got The Purpose, Watson Worth, featuring the photograph that was used

**00:13:05**

for the center label, for some reason is with this. I don't know why, but if we're archiving I figured like that's the kind of thing that you don't want to lose. Definitely not. We got a Trifle Try seven-inch which also is related to the table and I see that person who put this out is in the room. We got The Right to Assemble compilation and we got the Storm Shadow first seven-inch. These were really instrumental in why I wanted to start a label partially out of just naivete and out of just kind of being an excited kid in that I a lot of these

**00:13:36**

were put out by members of the bands themselves. That was something really exciting and all I really wanted to do when starting a label is put out my own band's records and then it of spiraled from there. But these seven-inches are really special and these are the first records I ever bought. I probably even remember the order I got them in and I had to play them on my dad's record player until I had enough records to justify getting my own record player. So, I put them on a cassette tape and stuff like that and I listened to them on the way to high school. On the school bus literally. So, I will

**00:14:09**

probably talk more about stuff but here we go. I can't donate these to the archive. These weren't in a plastic tub. These were literally like with my records and stuff like that. JIM TESTA: My name is Jim Testa. And in 1982 when I was 11 years old I swear. I was very little. I started a fan zine called Jersey Beat which exists today

**00:14:40**

on the web as JerseyBeat.com. But we started it back in 1982. There were no, for those of you who don't remember 1982, there were no personal computers. We had manual typewriters and a lot of imagination and rubber cement and we've kind of pasted stuff together. I actually had this printed at a place that did business envelopes and run by this old hippie guy who thought it was really cool that I was doing a magazine, so he gave me a really good price. It lasted for twenty-five years. Toward the

**00:15:10**

end we actually sort of looking like a real magazine with a glossy cover and look, typesetting. We had computers. So, the entire history of the personal computer can be traced through the American fan zine I think. Look, Macintosh letters. It's amazing. Print Shop Deluxe. So, I started in Hoboken mostly because I fell in love with this little scene at a place called Maxwell's

**00:15:40**

but within a very short time I was coming down to New Brunswick for the Court Tavern and a band called The Smithereens I became very good friends with. Which was kind of the beginning of the music scene here and we wrote a lot about that. All of the issues I brought here -- I don't know, maybe we can pass them around later or something -- have specific New Brunswick articles in them. Either bands or scene reports as we used to say. So, I guess that's me. RONAN KAUFMAN: Hello my name is Ronan

**00:16:10**

Kaufman. I'll get to this stuff in a minute but I have to say that Joe surprised me. Did you. I don't know if Joe knew. He definitely knew he was going to surprise me. So, I think one of the things that's interesting about the panel here is that before I came to Brunswick, I read Jersey Beat and I knew about bands in New Brunswick and I wanted to go to New Brunswick and I came to college here. Only really because I wanted to be part of this music scene. The

**00:16:41**

reason I bring that up is because whereas I was reading Jersey Beat before that you know Joe's got records in his stack that I put out, that I sang on, that I did the layouts for. Then there's Marissa next to Joe and so there's a really interesting continuity there I think that is set. I don't know if it was chronological. I came to New Brunswick in 1994 pretty much

**00:17:12**

exclusively because I was interested in the music that was going on here. Hardcore punk bands specifically. I became the music editor at The Inside Beat for The Daily Targum in '95. I did that through '98, when I was done being a student here. In that time, I spent a lot of time skipping classes and traveling and hanging out in basements and making those records and reading these zines. So, what I brought was patches. Hokey patches.

**00:17:42**

They actually kind of smell like fire because my home was recently involved with a house fire and we lost a lot of stuff, but what we didn't lose was like my box of punk stuff. So, I brought some of those patches because they're printed but they're kind of you know they're not paper and we used to like sew this to our clothing and walk around with this on us like you know this is what I do. This is what I'm into. Since I had a lot of duplicates

**00:18:13**

I thought it would be an interesting addition, so I brought the patches. It's really an honor to be here having this conversation especially being caught off guard with the sort of surprise continuity here is awesome. RONAN KAUFMAN: I think it's cool that we actually represented patches, zines, records and show flyers. But none of us talked to each other, so actually we hit all of the different things that we all save. Posters or something. Speaking of continuity and I noticed a flyer with

**00:18:43**

Jim's name on it also for Don Giovanni's show and Screaming Females in Hoboken, where Ronan lives kind of close to. So, we can tie all of us to this one this one flyer right here. MARISSA: How do panels work? What happens now? FRANK BRIDGES: What was the place next to the Subway sub shop? PANELISTS: Yoga Vayu FRANK BRIDGES: My First apartment was above the Subway sub

**00:19:13**

shop and it got robbed. The Subway sub shop got robbed at gunpoint one night. MARISSA: The deal with Yoga Vayu is that you could rent it, but I think like 50 percent of the proceeds had to go to this like charity that they always donated to. JOSEPH STEINHART: It was a dry space I recall. MARISSA: Yeah, but it wasn't. This is New Brunswick. JIM TESTA: I

**00:19:44**

met Marissa and saw the Screaming Females for the time at The Parlor. Which is one of the houses that she lived at. MARISSA: I actually never lived at The Parlor, although I might as well have lived at The Parlor. I think that the corner of the corner of Lewis Street and Hamilton was a big area of activity for me. RONAN KAUFMAN: It really was. MARISSA: That is what The Parlor was which is like the house that most frequently had shows that I went to at least when my band first started playing and then a couple of years later there

**00:20:14**

was a house across from Tata's called Meat Town USA that also, I think when they first everyone first signed the lease, they were like we're going to have one show a month. Then it was like every other day and the house got completely decimated. JOSEPH STEINHART: That's another interesting change you'll probably see when putting the archive together. I was thinking about when I first started coming in. Definitely I can see when Ronan probably first started coming here the shows were just named like 47

**00:20:45**

Handy or like 96 Louis and you know 133 Summers. I'm trying to remember what all the streets were. You would probably see in the flyers, they started to slowly list the names to avoid police and sometimes the early ones would list the name and the address. Over time you would just see like now you have to know the code like Meat Town or The Parlor and it changes at Courtland. That was something that sort of happened even [during] the time I was here and when it was first happening I was really resistant to it. The only reason I even found New Brunswick

## **00:21:16**

shows was I saw a flyer, and not because I knew people in the scene and so I feel like if I saw flyer and didn't know where to go without knowing people, who knows. So I didn't like that at the time, but it seemed like an unnecessary response. That's just something I was thinking that when you're talking about all the different house names and code words and stuff. MODERATOR: Can we talk about the basement scene? Because I mean, New Brunswick in general. AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can I just ask a question? When did this whole basement scene start? JOSEPH STEINHART: That one is for Jim probably. JIM TESTA: I

## **00:21:49**

can't name a specific night, you know, on this day October 22nd, but, The Bouncing Souls graduated from high school and moved to 54 Welton Street and started doing shows and to me that was the birth of the New Brunswick basement show. JOSEPH STEINHART: I would say that's probably accurate. There was Welton Street and then there was a house on Commercial Avenue. AUDIENCE MEMBER: What year? JOSEPH STEINHART: This is probably 1992. JIM TESTA: 89. JOSEPH STEINHART: Oh man. But I think that it really culminated with

## **00:22:19**

67 Handy Street, which for many years was run by a guy named Chris Ross who's still he lives in Mill Town, and he's raising his kids around here, he still plays in bands and half of you probably know him. But 67 Handy Street was a place that became I think sort of like the mega-basement because you had bands planning their tours around making sure that they stop there. I'll never forget the last show at 67 Handy Street when it was over. It was a huge, all-day show and Sick Of It All was going to come play the show. You know, in that scene, at

**00:22:49**

that time, having Sick Of It All play a basement was sort of unheard of. They were playing Hammerstein Ballroom and big places and of course the show got shut down before they could play because nobody could listen to the rules and stay out of the street. But that was sort of like the ultimate poetic ending to this gathering of vaguely you know messed up people who are doing art in their basement and hoping that the cops didn't shut it down before they got over with it.

**00:23:20**

But I would say that Handy Street was sort of the sort of like the model that a lot of basements followed and then probably got lost to history. I'm sure that kids who are doing shows in basements now have never heard of Handy Street. That's my guess. RONAN KAUFMAN: Hindsight's seven-inch immortalized the address at least. JIM TESTA: But the Bouncing Souls house was the first one I remember hearing about. Welton Street was the first one that I remember. So, I think you can probably

**00:23:50**

date it. Also, up until that point, the University was a little bit more open to letting music on campus. There used to be shows at Scott Hall and also in the 70s, when I was in college, the drinking age was only 18 so it wasn't a problem -- although there were no bands in the 70s -- but they wouldn't have been a problem. Does anyone know when the drinking age changed? I think it might have been like



**00:24:20**

the early, like the mid-80s, because I think the early days of the Court Tavern it was still 18 and up. So, the Court Tavern opened around '79, '80. When I knew I was doing this panel I emailed Jim Babjak from The Smithereens, who were the first band to really put New Brunswick on the map as a place. He told me they started playing in 1980 at the Court Tavern and then the Melody Bar and all those other places followed in the 80s. AUDIENCE MEMBER: So, these were sort of simultaneous things. JIM TESTA: Well

**00:24:52**

no. The Court Tavern came first and then once the drinking age went up, I think that's what spurred the house. The University had tried a little bit to let people have bands on campus and for whatever reason they didn't really like that way. There was a guy named Sam Schiffman -- who, whenever this history is written deserves his own chapter -- who was an indefatigable promoter. He was in a bunch of really cool bands, PED

**00:25:22**

and some other bands. He put on a lot of shows. The AOD guys played a lot of his shows and stuff so. So, they were hardcore shows with slam dancing and all that crazy stuff. Which you can understand if you're a university and you have to pay for insurance, you might not want kids jumping off the roof. Once the drinking age went up and then the university kind of pulled out, I think that's what kids started saying, well we'll just do our own shows. RONAN KAUFMAN: And there were still matinees,

**00:25:53**

you had the Melody and the Boldrum, all these places that would pop up and do a few shows and some were longer and more consistent than others. But even the promoters who were doing these shows at those venues, if it was an all-ages show it was just sometimes easier to do it in someone's house. Or they would say, play the first show at the Melody and then play the late show in our basement and we'll have a party with fewer rules and more fun. A lot of those promoters were the same the same people. MARISSA: Yeah.

**00:26:24**

By the time I got to New Brunswick in 2004 I think the first thing I asked someone at Mason Gross was where the record store was and they were like there isn't one. Then I remember getting on the bus to go for a ride to see what was around New Brunswick and I think I cried because I was like, I have to live here for 4 years and there is nothing here to do. Every single venue that Ronan and Jim just mentioned were gone. So there

**00:26:54**

was nowhere to buy music, there was nowhere to see music, and in my experience having played a great many colleges and state universities, Rutgers is like an anomaly. It makes no sense that the school won't dedicate a fraction of its huge budget to arts and culture. In fact, since I started school in 2004 they've been systematically getting rid of all of that

**00:27:24**

stuff. Even when I was in Mason Gross they fired two of our most engaging and well-respected professors and every single venue is gone. People were like, what about the Court Tavern. The Court Tavern is not all ages. It's not inclusive. A lot of people don't feel safe there and they're not going to book every show that they don't find profitable. So, it's crazy to me that a place as huge as Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, which has the highest population

**00:27:55**

density in the country, doesn't have a place for someone to play a guitar for an excited audience. Instead people have been awesome enough to open up their homes and invite strangers into their houses and yeah, the cops show up because it's dangerous. It's a fire hazard. But if there's a frat party it's cool. RONAN KAUFMAN: I think it's important to point out that same thing happened in New York City. Think about

**00:28:25**

all the clubs that sustained the 80s and 90s: The Continental; the Wetlands. Even the clubs that weren't rock-oriented like the Limelight. All these places that were counterculture-oriented or even a little bit whatever, they're gone. They're gone. So, it was sadly not surprising to see it happen here because it looked like it was happening in Manhattan. They had a head start. JIM TESTA: What's interesting is that in the 70s when I was a student here there were five record stores in town. There were no

**00:28:55**

clubs. Clubs started happening with the punk thing in the late 70s early 80s. There were no nightclubs or anything, but there were five record stores. There was Cheap Thrills which was like the big college record store. But there are places where you could buy a Black party records like Red Foxx records with all the dirty words on them or Blow Fly records. There were places where you could just buy classical [records]. Just big, successful music stores. You could buy just classical records or Frank Sinatra records or things that grown-ups would listen

**00:29:25**

to. Five. Five record stores in town and then one by one they all failed. They all died off. But this was called the Hub City. And then 1975, Patti Smith came to town -- because Lenny Kaye used to play the Rutgers fraternities in his garage band doing covers -- had no place to play and the old, I don't know if anyone remembers the original George Street Playhouse, which was in a basement, was a converted grocery store. Supermarket actually. But I saw the Patti Smith

**00:29:55**

band in 1975 in the old, original George Street Playhouse. Bruce Springsteen came in 72 I think and played the Ledge -- which was not the real Student Center, but the commuter Student Center -- for like 75 cents. Back then we called it the Ledge. When I went to Cleveland to the Rock n Roll Hall of Fame -- If you're inducted you

**00:30:25**

get your own little glass display case -- and I was looking at the Springsteen display case and actually screamed out loud because there is a poster in Bruce Springsteen's display case of that Ledge show; Rutgers Ledge, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, 75 cents and all the beer you can drink. But there was no live music scene, but there was music here. There were a lot of record stores. AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you confirm that the Velvet Underground played Scott Hall? Is that true? VARIOUS AUDIENCE MEMBERS: They did. Actually yeah. FRANK BRIDGES: Yeah, I've actually been doing

**00:30:55**

some research. They played two colleges on some sort of tour. Warhol was here and a whole crew of people. It was videotaped for a film. And they got into a scuffle with some cameramen [unintelligible] in the dining hall. It was definitely the Underground. They wore all white and they projected on them. So, I'm hoping one day to actually go to the Warhol Archive because

**00:31:26**

that is really. Actually, I think Greg is actually the one who told me that in the warehouse at Hannibal Carthage Records on Jersey Street. AUDIENCE MEMBER: You have to find that footage. FRANK BRIDGES: Well that would probably be in the Warhol Archive as well. You all said a lot of things and I was trying to keep up. In talking about the places, just to add to that I think, there were venues to play but then they started to kind of disappear as well. You know, the Melody, the Roxy, Baldrome, the place under the hotel, the Down Under. JIM TESTA: Plum Street

**00:32:01**

Pub, Budapest Cafe. There was a point where everybody was putting on shows. FRANK BRIDGES: There were also places, the comedy shops, yeah. Like Yuk Yuks. Club 375 was having shows. I was going to ask about the basement scene, but now let's move on to actually. So, talking about the record stores. You all are producing --well definitely the three of you are producing things -- but you're definitely

**00:32:34**

producing things too. JIM TESTA: Well the Screaming Females released their, what, first three records. MARISSA: The first two. FRANK BRIDGES: Oh. Fantastic. So, with that thought, with the New Brunswick scene, how have you sold your wares? How has that been without stores? Because, I mean, I'm trying to think. Since we have different eras up here I'm trying to think like when did Cheap Thrills close? JOSEPH STEINHART: We had that diner that had all those records in there for a while. RONAN KAUFMAN: Oh yeah! What was that place? That place was haunted. JOSEPH STEINHART: They sold fish tanks and records I think. I don't know if you ever went inside of

**00:33:04**

their. VARIOUS AUDIENCE MEMBERS: All these records were all over the place. Was that the diner? RONAN KAUFMAN: It was a fish tank store. There's a lot of interesting stories about that place. MARISSA: I was really sad that when that was gone. JOSEPH STEINHART: So, the question is about selling stuff? FRANK BRIDGES: So, you're making your things, right? How are you getting out there? RONAN KAUFMAN: Well I mean, when I was doing a fanzine I would

walk around at shows at Middlesex County College or the Melody with a bag of them and say this is a dollar would you please buy it. Because that was what

### **00:33:35**

you had to do. I just want to make a comment before anyone gets too sad. I know all of us, we have attachments to things like record stores and venues and all these things, but these things are all sort of like products of the limitations that we have. We go to a record store because that's where you have to go to get music and that's the only place you can go to meet someone who likes music. That's no longer really the case. I

### **00:34:06**

get in arguments with friends who miss all the old stuff and I'm always like there's no point in missing the old stuff because it's gone and there's always going to be new stuff. These are all sort of vessels that we pour our needs into. You know if we feel the need to have community we make it out of basements or we make it out of the record store. Now we make it out of Facebook or whatever you make it out of. But I always had this skepticism and I encourage people to like check their sentimentality at the door a little bit because I'll never forget

### **00:34:36**

the argument I gotten with a really good friend making a record and he was talking about like how a 12 inch has to be this perfect story from beginning to end. How you really have to maximize those sixty-seven minutes or whatever it is and I was like dude you know the only reason it's that long is because like that's as long as they can make it at the time and it's so

what. You know it's not like a holy sort of format. It's always changing and always growing. It's just the thought in terms of the discussion we just had and like the good old days stuff, I'd rather people

**00:35:07**

look forward because the only way we're going to make new stuff that the next group are going to look back on is if we look forward. JOSEPH STEINHART: I come at this from a really weird like middle point of where there was this day where there were the five record stores, although, especially in the 70s that was just stores, because like when I was coming record stores meant a place they sold vinyl which was just kind of weird niche thing. Jim that was just like Bradley's or Corvettes. Then the same with the venues. I was

**00:35:37**

kind of around in this time when all those venues like Wetlands and Coney Island High and the stuff in New York, Old Knitting Factory was all there. For me, the basement scene and the independent record stores was really about the independent focus. It was about taking things into your own terms. So, it's interesting hearing the beginnings of the basement scene coming out of you know a response to a place you need to drink -- and I think that's just fine that's an important part of being young -- but it seems like that was very much about that. But I



**00:36:08**

kind of came from this time where there was plenty of places to go to all-ages punk shows and it was really about taking it in your own control and booking your own shows on your own terms, putting out your own records on your own terms. The independent stores were important because, again I was kind of around from when there was there was no internet or Napster and then there was pretty quickly, but it wasn't it was about buying records in independent stores because you really believed in maintaining independent distribution and independent networks. That's actually I guess still where I am today and trying to navigate how to deal with

**00:36:38**

that in the digital era. So just that's another kind of thing to think about with all the different technologies and record stores and things like that is a really big part of it for people at least my age had to do with really maintaining the independent focus from this sort of broader corporate stuff. **MARISSA:** I mean I'm a millennial so I have always had access to the Internet. I grew up with my

**00:37:09**

millennial mom. **JOSEPH STEINHART:** I don't think you're a millennial. No offense but. **MARISSA:** No. There's a test for it. I am. I think I'm on the cusp. **JOSEPH STEINHART:** They are like 19. **MARISSA:** No. That is too young. We are not even supposed to talk about people that young on the panel. Don't touch me. Anyway. So, I've always had access to the Internet. I grew

**00:37:39**

up with it. Then when I came to Rutgers, since there was no like physical epicenter like a record store or like a music venue to hang out in, it basically meant that I was completely alone for like over two years and didn't have any friends or anyone to talk to. You can't Google like "friend, people who want to hang out with me." Also, on my list of things to do as a 19 year old was start a band. Where was I going to

**00:38:09**

meet those people. There were there was nowhere for me to find that stuff. So instead I just hung out at Dunkin Donuts and drew pictures of guys hanging themselves. Then I went to figure drawing class. So, what I'm saying is like even though I understand that like everybody has easy access to like streaming media and that's fine. I used the Internet every day and I have a mobile telephone with data and all that crap. It

**00:38:39**

is really important to have a physical space where you can cultivate community and look at people and express yourselves through body language and eye contact and do projects together that involve your hands you know. I think that is why I did get really upset and sad when that T.A. told me there were no record stores. I thought it was unbelievable. Now there is a record store on Easton

**00:39:09**

Avenue, Spina Records, but it was kind of like a travesty. There is nowhere for people who like music and art to hang out and talk to each other and exchange ideas. MODERATOR: Dunkin Donuts sounded cool though. MARISSA: It's not though it's not even a good Dunkin Donuts. The kosher one is in Highland Park. They have like the cool vegan like Egg McMuffin thing. You don't have to tell me. RONAN KAUFMAN: I spent a lot of my life inside Dunkin Donuts. AUDIENCE MEMBER: When I do my walk

**00:39:40**

of shame from the bars in New Brunswick I usually stop there. MARISSA: You should go to the scary bars that are closer to Route 1. AUDIENCE MEMBER: Then I can't get the Dunkin Donuts because that one closes early. Then you got the White Rose, so I don't know. MARISSA: Never been there. FRANK BRIDGES: For your releases. Okay, so you found bandmates. What brought you to the idea of, well let's put this out on our own. Who were you going to get it to? Were you going to get it to folks in New Brunswick?

**00:40:12**

Once you started doing shows? Or were you thinking that that was something you would travel around and sell? MARISSA: We immediately started talking about touring. Like not soon after playing a lot of New Brunswick shows once we came to realize that there were other usually college towns but not always necessarily that had like DIY networks. Because they would come to New Brunswick, we would throw them a show and then we'd like pay it forward as we moved across the country. Our

**00:40:43**

initial intention was just to have a physical object so that we could share it with people when they came to see us play and they wouldn't leave with nothing if they enjoyed the music. So, we didn't know how to put out a record. We had never done it before. Certainly, nobody was interested in doing it for us and thanks to the power of the Internet we Googled it. How to make our record. We made our first record just to sell our punk shows that we played in New Brunswick. Then

**00:41:13**

shortly thereafter we went on like our first national tour and that was what we were going on tour for, to sell this record that we had just invested lots of our personal money in. Then it kind of just kept rolling along with each concept. Like each record that came after. JOSEPH STEINHART: Distribution was really not a goal that I had in mind when starting a record label. It was literally to make the records exist. Again, I think honestly if I was born at a different time and was 16

**00:41:45**

or something now with Bandcamp and the Internet the way it is, I would probably never been like, oh I need to start putting out people's music. I really just wanted to like hear it, but there was something really urgent about bands making these recordings that the only way to hear was if someone somehow like fronted the money to like make a record and that was really the goal and I know that was the goal for a lot of these records. I'm sure none of these records, no offense, ever recouped their investment and yet they really changed the lives of some of the people that listen to them. Now

**00:42:17**

Again, you can just --some of these you probably can't even find online -- but the point is if these bands were on now they would have a Bandcamp and for me that's all I really wanted. I want to listen to these bands and really a real goal of a record label when I started was just making this stuff exist. Then how do you sell it was a total afterthought. If people that are going to want it -- you know are you guys are starting an archive, you understand the idea of trying to preserve you know stuff and document stuff and archive stuff and that was that was really the goal at the time of starting the label. MARISSA: There was that weird CDR period of

**00:42:47**

time right before Don Giovanni where everyone was like, I'll just do it myself. I'll burn it on a CDR I got at Staples that melts in your car. RONAN KAUFMAN: I think the other thing is you get to the point where you had a record you had to invest an enormous amount of effort, time and dedication because you couldn't just kind of walk over to your Mac throw down a couple of tracks when , have a moment, email to your friend and say get to this one. You had to book time at the studio. It was blocked out, it was paid for, it was set. You had "x" number of days and you had to get your stuff done in that time and if you didn't you

**00:43:17**

were in trouble. All these things took, I mean to put a seven-inch out you know it takes like six months minimum because you have to write songs, you have to book time, you have to record, you have to mix, you have to master, you have to press, you have to get artwork, you have to get your friends to sit around and shove a thousand of these into polybags. It takes work and I

think that now there's a lot less effort required to put music, and for the distribution piece it's even more so, because it used to be you needed a network, a real social

**00:43:47**

network, to get your music to people. Now you can put it on and anyone in the world can hear it literally the second you're done. So, the context for creating and distributing, this has really changed and I think that as creators it changes. Like for a kid who has the option to create it's a double-edged sword. On the one hand it's great. There's more access. It's easier to take a vision and bring it to something tangible more quickly with less effort, but on the other hand now you have like everybody thinks they're a musician and everybody is recording. You

**00:44:19**

know it's all out there. So, it's changed dramatically. JIM TESTA: I was thinking when we were thinking about this panel, apropos to what we were just talking about, how we're kind of living in an age now when we're not archiving anything because we're not making things anymore. I don't know, Marissa is flyer culture is still a thing? Do kids still make flyers? MARISSA: Yeah. For sure. JIM TESTA: So maybe flyer culture, but I mean so many bands today just put their stuff [out].

**00:44:49**

Why press a CD like Joe did or vinyl or just go on Bandcamp? But I mean some of us who are around the dawn of the MP 3. Remember MP3.com which was this huge reservoir of online music. One day it just got turned off. It wasn't there anymore. If Microsoft buys Bandcamp tomorrow and decides to take it offline all that's gone forever and it's kind of sad.

**00:45:21**

I mean here's an interview I did in 1982. I've interviewed Screaming Females what three, four times? They were all on my website. They're all gone because none of that stuff was archived properly. JOSEPH STEINHART: Where did it go? JIM TESTA: Disc crashes. Server crashes. JOSEPH STEINHART: You never backed it up or saved a hard copy of it? JIM TESTA: Now I do, but back then I had a couple of hard discs disappear. I had a server company go under. So, a lot of this stuff just

**00:45:51**

is zeros and ones and it just disappears forever. AUDIENCE MEMBER: [unintelligible] was it archived thought that process? JIM TESTA: I've been able to pull up some things but a lot of the graphics don't come up. So, you lose a lot. FRANK BRIDGES: Speaking of archives, do we have. JOSEPH STEINHART: Someone had a question. FRANK BRIDGES: Oh, we're going to have a Q & A. Well whatever you want

**00:46:21**

to do. JOSEPH STEINHART: I was just saying. I didn't mean to take over. Sorry. MODERATOR: I wanted to see if we had any, talking about archives, Christine if you had any questions for all that we've talked about from the idea of archiving, personal archiving and thinking what our steps are going to be. CHRISTINE LUTZ: I am thinking, do you guys have put any thought behind you're going to be turning stuff over to an archive and theoretically it'll be there in perpetuity.

**00:47:09**

How do you maybe envision people using it? Do you have any thoughts on how we might share it more widely? RONAN KAUFMAN: I have to say it's enormously gratifying that this is even happening because so much of my like rationale and inspiration and motivation for creating fanzines and putting out records and writing the book that I am here for and all this stuff was because

**00:47:40**

you know I insisted that what my friends and I were doing was important and that it was significant and that it was real and that we were seeing things that mattered and that many years from now when people look back if they had the opportunity to examine what we were saying and in the space and the time we were at then it would have really mattered more than many other things that were being said at the time. If you look at it through the lens of music you know I get extremely opinionated about it because,



**00:48:10**

let's face it, not all music is of substance. There's a spectrum of what you will find and I think the people that were involved with the music that I was involved with whether they were right or wrong have the feeling that what they were doing was like pure substance. It was there because they had something to say. Not because they wanted to make nice sounds, but because they had something to say and music was the way they were going to say it. So, an archive

**00:48:41**

of this kind of material is extremely gratifying to me and I'm sure everyone else here because it brings legitimacy to like my friends and the things that they were saying and the awesome music that they played and the great shows. You know when I wrote the book that I wrote I wrote it because I wanted to figure out a way to capture feelings that I could never explain to people. There were moments when like The Degenerix were playing who were like my homies like I am you know we when we went everywhere

**00:49:11**

together in jail. There were moments where like you know your friends are playing a song and you realize that your favorite songs. It's a privilege that when your friends have written your favorite songs and you know the place that it comes from. So, you know I think that there is really like it was like a happening you know there were these moments where you're in the crowd or when you were playing it didn't matter because everyone was sort of on the same plane really. You

**00:49:42**

felt like this moment where like you know I guess like when the snake handlers are really like feeling they're snakes it's like that you know we're like you're not sure that God exists, but in my head, because right now you feel really special. It's likely a function of development and being you know you're 20 and everything is exciting and you're not bitter and things are new and you're discovering there's a lot of things. It's very subjective but it doesn't make it less real. So

**00:50:12**

for me your question about like how do you approach this archive, I think the most important part for me is that it establishes a genuine academic reverence for this source material that for years even my friends were like, shut up, what are you doing. You know we're just you know we're in a band or we're just here you know we're friends but I always had to say, no. We're a part of something. I'm like when we're older you're going to look back and you're going to realize our pocket their pocket. The people who were here 10 years before and the people who will

**00:50:42**

come afterwards, hopefully they are a part of something. So, I think that's for me what they should be about it when people come to see it that they are able to handle the artifacts of you know like a happening that took place over a period of time in different ways. JIM TESTA: I got a letter from one of your predecessors asking me if I wanted to donate a complete set of Jersey Beats and that was one of the proudest moments in my life especially having been a Rutgers alumnus.

## **00:51:12**

So, there is a complete set of Jersey Beats from 1980 to 2007 that is in the library archives. Well you were Targum. Were you ever Targum? MARISSA: Did I ever write for them? No. But I read it every morning when I was eating correctly. JIM TESTA: Well Ronan and I are both Targum guys so all the Targums there too, going back. So, you know our bylines are going to be there. For

## **00:51:44**

you know Ronan's grandkids, I don't have any kids, but for Ronan's great-grandchildren to see something. It's what we do. It's how what we do becomes part of history. That's a really important thing. Yeah. RONAN KAUFMAN: I feel like so much to what, especially early on before the internet, I was trying to even the reason I wanted to a label was very much as a way to link archive and document what I was seeing. Because again like be seeing these great bands and if someone wasn't putting out the records it would only be a story you told, oh this band used to be so good. Again

## **00:52:15**

they couldn't put on the Internet and it clearly wasn't going to sell enough for them to find a label unless they were one of these bigger touring bands which we weren't working with until we met you. So, like most of the things I'm putting out it was like if I don't put this out no one's going to put it out and I'm just going to like remember and felt it really felt like out of necessity. The goal was really the goal really was to just kind of archive and document through the label early on and in some ways, it still is but I feel like I may be documenting different things but for a really long time the goal was really to kind of follow the music scene happening in

**00:52:45**

New Brunswick. People always ask me how to you know get on the label or something like that and I'd say it's almost like a foregone conclusion. It's like we're running crash course into each other and if your band is like playing in the scene that I'm sort of trying to put it all the music in and document and as long as your band sticks around long enough that we have enough money at some point well we'll put a record out. That was really the goal of the label is for a really long time and I think what part of what changed that was the Internet. It felt less about just documenting stuff was around me and more about trying to get the word out through

**00:53:15**

distribution. But before the internet I'd put out the labels probably really and when I see the Internet obviously I'm not that old, I mean before sort of the Napster and stuff like that and then really especially Bandcamp and iTunes. If that stuff never came out even the Internet still exists I feel like I would still just be trying to get records out from small bands which is still really a lot of the goal I guess. But now it's to help them get bigger. Before it was just so the record existed like forever. **MARISSA:** I just think it'll be cool

**00:53:45**

that there'll be some kind of archive of this very little tiny bit of history that happened in New Brunswick. I think if no one gathered all the bits and pieces it would be largely forgotten and it shouldn't be because it was a very wonderful time in my life and I'm in a lot of people I see here it's also important to them. What I think is funny is that it will be at the Rutgers library because Rutgers

**00:54:17**

hates art. JOSEPH STEINHART: I'm the only one here that didn't go to Rutgers. AUDIENCE MEMBER: So, you're really saying that Rutgers played no role in fostering this music scene. MARISSA: I mean I lived here and I got a degree from here. JOSEPH STEINHART: Indirectly. MARISSA: They bring they bring all the humans living in this little town called New Brunswick. AUDIENCE MEMBER: There was a time when they did. MARISSA: Yeah, I never experienced

**00:54:47**

it. I would love for it to happen again. I'm all for it. FRANK BRIDGES: Let's not forget that we invited you and it is being recorded. You're all making good points. MARISSA: No. Hey. Look, your dorms are pretty clean. I liked one of the dining halls. Thanks for the degree and whatever. You guys hate art, that is fine. JOSEPH STEINHART: I keep fielding a question

**00:55:17**

I'm not supposed to. FRANK BRIDGES: We are going to have our good friend James Hodges somehow wrangle the questions. I'm feeling a little overwhelmed, but maybe we instead of fighting the way, we just go with it, man. MARISSA: No, I don't want to point. Yeah that's right. We're doing this on our own terms. You have the right attitude now. AUDIENCE MEMBER #1: Thank

**00:55:58**

you very much for the talk. It's been interesting. In fact, I wanted to bring up two questions about the archive in general. This is the first time I'm learning about this New Brunswick music scene. I'm a music researcher myself and I'm interested because some of my students are interested as well. I want to send them and take advantage of this opportunity. I have two questions that I suspect are more directed to Christine than the panel, but perhaps the panel can contribute. My first one is very general

**00:56:29**

but since it's again my first time I wondered about the scope of the archive. When I saw "New Brunswick Music Scene", I wondered how broad were you thinking. Of course, this panel is focused on this particular music scene which is great, but I can remember, [unintelligible] jazz band. I wondered what your scope was. What's your long-term plan? That's one question and the second one was again a lot more related to the archival part and I'm joining you in trying to understand what Rutgers' role is here.

**00:56:59**

I'm worried about University Archives. Because in the back of my mind, being a music researcher, this is what I do for a living. I go to archives. I understand that there's unique problems and issues with collections and providing access especially for music collections. What is in the back of my mind is that we do have a really important archive in Rutgers, fortunately in music. It's in Newark but it's very important [unintelligible] study which is the largest

**00:57:30**

study in the world. So, I was wondering if you're going to get someone to know researches work because it is a different monster. I've dealt with music archives and it's a different thing than text-based collections. Here you're going to have some of both, but I was wondering if you could focus on those two answers. The scope and the handling of the resources and reliance on Rutgers. CHRISTINE LUTZ: To answer your first question

**00:58:00**

we're going to see where this goes I think. We are starting from scratch. In my day to day job life here I collect printed New Jersey related material. So, my initial hook is really things like filing paper. It's the flyers, collecting set lists and the ephemera of it, but I am getting

**00:58:33**

recordings as well, but no patches. But yeah, I need to tap into the expertise of my colleagues. I've also been talking with and have looked to the D.C. companies and archives as sort of a model here. How they're handling their materials. You want things to

**00:59:06**

be accessible obviously. I don't want to get all like archive-y on people but we're going to follow standards and do a finding aid and make this collection available. But we do have these resources such as the IJS. We also have the oral history project. We've also talked about wanting to do interviews. Finding those

**00:59:36**

people who appreciate art and music and all that is going to be some work. I don't want this to be a hidden collection. For a long time, we talked about what are we going to call this archive? Finally we settled on New Brunswick Music Scene. But our initial focus is on more of the hardcore Rock

**01:00:10**

n Roll or whatever you want to call it, but we're very much aware that there is a huge jazz scene and lots of other scenes, other types of music going on in New Brunswick. We haven't gone too far past this, but we would like to be inclusive. Do we build a separate archive or maybe branch out? FRANK BRIDGES: If I can add to that too, in putting this together you know like

**01:00:40**

everyone has been talking about you know they're coming from the New Brunswick music scene whatever you know from their perspective right from their time period here. Probably everyone is covering all of these certain little time periods. I know my time period right and I know the bands that were around and all that. I'm like I want to capture that and having people from other kinds time periods and stuff. So, we try to open it up and we don't want it to be just be music because I was thinking of Ronan putting these zines together like that was very big as well too. We are talking



## **01:01:10**

About Stussi (sp) who was doing White Bread at the time and I'm sure there's tons of other zines as well. So, we call it music scene, a lot of time we talk about "the scene" and what's going on in New Brunswick like that. So, we're trying to keep it very open, but as an archive and also as a collector, and as a researcher I'm also very partial as well. Like we want to have access digitally and physically so that people can come and you can enjoy actually at home in your jammies

## **01:01:40**

with the coffee right and hopefully streamed some music or check out flyers but also people who are doing research you know academic research can come here and go through the material physically as much as possible. AUDIENCE MEMBER #1: There is a racial or class component that needs to be taken into account. So New Brunswick is more than 30 percent actually specifically southern Mexican population and you know they're part of the New Brunswick music scene now. So, there's considerations to be taken into account

## **01:02:11**

as we grow so it truly, and I know everybody wants a truly inclusive project that incorporates what New Brunswick is, which is a very diverse and rich community.[unintelligible] JIM TESTA: I

**01:02:54**

mean if you want to go all the way back, Paul Robeson, one of the great, great vocalists of the 20th century went to Rutgers and before, he was the star of the Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet. Ozzie Nelson was a big band leader and he went to Rutgers. AUDIENCE MEMBER #2: One of the things I was thinking about is you could have done a panel and covered the 30 to 40 years of New Brunswick music. It just wouldn't have made sense. You have to start somewhere. means you got to start somewhere. So. RONAN KAUFMAN: Although I will

**01:03:24**

say, for what it's worth. For what it's worth though having participated a lot during the 90s it was a very male, very white environment. I mean make no mistake about it. Extremely male, extremely white and that is what it is. It is a fact. However, I don't think that's necessarily by any sort of exclusion. It is

**01:03:54**

circumstance and timing and who happens to be in a place at what time based on the variables that affect their individual life or the variables that affect large groups of people over large periods of time. But, it was always something that did bother me is that -- at least for the section of people that I was involved with --there was an overwhelming sort of drive towards inclusiveness but

**01:04:25**

if you look at what was going on in the room at any given time and presented that picture to a stranger it may not have appeared inclusive. That always was an issue for me although I will say, especially with respect to the involvement of women, everyone's sort of like tried to do their best to make sure that there was equity and everyone was getting a chance to speak and that there was no such thing as like a girl band or, oh that band is unusual because there's a girl in the

**01:04:55**

band. Because at a time that was unusual and in the hardcore and punk scene it was exclusionary. It was very much a boy's club in a lot of ways and especially in New York and there was a big bleed in that way. So, I appreciate your comment. I also think however, that when people out in the world think "New Brunswick Music Scene" if you say that the people who have heard that phrase before it has whether, for good or for bad, sort of like an established

**01:05:26**

frame. We're talking about bands that people sort of know when you watch the Giants and they're going to commercial and you hear the Gaslight Anthem playing out you know people will refer to them as a New Brunswick band and that's the frame whether for good or for bad. It exists and sometimes perception is reality unfortunately. AUDIENCE MEMBER #2: Because The Smithereens and a bunch of other bands that came out at the time that were somewhat household names. I don't know if they all played at football games. RONAN KAUFMAN: No, no, no, but I'm saying

**01:05:56**

I'm saying that. Sure. AUDIENCE MEMBER #2: Looking Glass, Brandy. JOSEPH STEINHART: I just want to say too though and I think to speak to your point, which is really important, sometimes you do actually have to look for the stuff that's there. So like Ronan said it's true a lot of the times the shows would work and they talk about social issues but the crowd would be all kind of white male. But if you start to look for the bands these bands are in New Brunswick and they're really good a lot of times. Not just female there's a lot of like

**01:06:26**

there's a lot of bands that come out of the Hispanic areas and things like that. Like there's really like a really diverse range of bands in New Brunswick. And I think sometimes a music scene can be very self-selecting. I think it's important for a scene to be aware of that and actually work to bring people in rather than just say, Oh there's no one here, but we're all like on this side of things. So sometimes you have to make an effort to bring people in and not just make spaces feel inclusive, but actually work to bring those people into the inclusive spaces until it's at a point where. So, I think what you're saying is really important and I think that stuff does

**01:06:56**

have to be archived it might be a good way to find some of it out. AUDIENCE MEMBER #2: It's been harder to find stuff from the 80s and 90s. Not to find people that remember the bands that were out during that time. But unless you were collecting paper. RONAN KAUFMAN: Or have firsthand accounts. JOSEPH STEINHART: It's there though. That's the thing and I think that's the whole point of an academic archive like that. AUDIENCE MEMBER #3: So

**01:07:26**

I have an archival question. So, I think it's really cool that this archiving thing is happening, but I think we should remember that archiving is a very broad term. So, when you guys were producing all this content like record zines and stuff, did you never really consider it being in a college library. Personally, I love print media, I think it's great that this is happening, but as someone who makes zines and collects zines, the reason why I kind

**01:07:57**

of go to zines and not to the Targum or something like that is because I feel like I want to try to gauge a particular audience. I know that maybe with your music or the records you bring out in your zines you're trying to reach a certain audience and maybe not necessarily like one that's as broad as the Rutgers University Library. So, I don't know I just kind of want to hear the thoughts on that from the panelists. MARISSA: I mean from my personal perspective I think when I was younger and

**01:08:27**

didn't know where to go looking for like things that were pertinent to my niche interests like I was really into Riot Girl and I Kill Rock Stars and I could get on their website but then after that I was like what do I do? How do I find people who also like these bands? And even though I totally understand that you're like this belongs to like our subculture and I'm not going to hand it over to like a big academic institution, I think for like younger people who are seeking out things and don't

**01:08:57**

know how to navigate through what is kind of like a really difficult social network like our Punk community in New Brunswick. If you don't know where Vulgar Palace is or wherever, you're not going to find it unless you randomly meet somebody who can tell you and trusts you to tell you. So, having it be easily accessible so someone can be like, oh I'm going to check out, like I went to the records archive I saw this band named

**01:09:27**

Cheeky. I'm going to check it out and then they like it. It might make their life so much better if they have easy access to like the relics. JOSEPH STEINHART: But also, I don't think the goal or the prime purpose of the archive has been for people like seeking out music, I'm going to go check out what's in the archive. I think the goal is really to be preserving this stuff so it doesn't vanish for basically for academic research and I'm sure maybe someone that's seeking out music and can't find it anywhere might desperately seek it at the Rutgers Music Archive. I am just saying, like a record store. I

**01:10:02**

remember in college I did go to try to find some episodes of television that were only at the archive on videotape as just a fan. They were Adam's Family episodes from the original series. Hulu and Netflix didn't exist. You actually had to wear plastic headphones okay but the point is I understand your point. Certainly, I'm not creating the content for the university archive and for Rutgers University to have, but

**01:10:33**

I also think it's a really important purpose of a university and I strongly believe in academic research and the university research to have access to this to this stuff so they can we can they can learn more about it. So, I think studying something, which is often the purpose of an archive, is really different than we're not creating it like for the Rutgers library. They now want to pick this stuff up and preserve it and archive it and document it and I think that's really wonderful. So that's how I feel personally. **MARISSA:** They don't want to take all this trash

**01:11:03**

out of my room. **JOSEPH STEINHART:** They're not getting my stuff till I'm dead. I'll facsimile and photocopy it. **MARISSA:** I have a lot more trash. **JOSEPH STEINHART:** Marissa helped me clean up my parents' house actually. I have the full archive in the basement, but it's not coming to you guys until I'm dead. **JIM TESTA:** Well coming from a news background and which started right on this campus at the Targum, you always have that idea in the back of your head that news is the first rough draft of history. So that probably

**01:11:34**

always existed but I honestly if anyone had told me thirty- five years ago that I'd be sitting at the Alexander Library talking about my fanzine I would've thought you were completely totally insane. All through the twenty-five years that I did the print zine people were always asking me like, wow, [they] thought I was somehow in competition with the Aquarian Weekly which is still around. Maybe the people at the Aquarian even thought that could sometimes I'd find cool bands before they did. But I never did because I wasn't ready for their

**01:12:04**

audience. I was writing for my friends, for my audience, for the people that I was hanging out with. That changed. I mean there was a period in the 90s. There's some people here I know very well I was in New Brunswick like every weekend and then from 1991 to 1994 I was at ABC No Rio in New York City every weekend. Then from 1996 to early 2000s I was hanging out with Joe and his friends you know at clubs seeing certain kinds of bands. So that's who I was writing

**01:12:34**

about. I was writing to people who wanted to know about the stuff I liked and maybe someday in the future people will care about that or at least be curious about it. I'm willing to kind of like to know like the people who voted for Abraham Lincoln like what songs were they singing. Before there was radio everybody had a piano and an electric guitar in their house and there was music. What did they listen to? What were their favorite songs? So maybe you know we'll become part of history that way and it's kind of

**01:13:04**

nice to know that this stuff will outlive us and be there if anybody is curious. AUDIENCE  
MEMBER #4: I have a question for the archivist. How much of a role is the music going to play in the archive? I have a ton of stuff and little cassettes the bands used to give out. All that stuff. I don't think there is too much access to that. CHRISTINE LUTZ: [unintelligible] AUDIENCE  
MEMBER #4: Is



**01:13:56**

there copyright for those old seven-inches I have in my basement? JIM TESTA: If someone does a Beatles cover on one of them there is. Yeah. AUDIENCE MEMBER #4: If it's their music and the band is long gone, are you going to make them? JOESPH STEINHART: The band still owns the copyright though in theory. JIM TESTA: No, we are talking about original music. JOESPH STEINHART: Even the stuff on these seven-inches, the band owns these songs. They might never find out it's in the archive but technically at any point they come and say. AUDIENCE MEMBER #4: Could you stream it. JOESPH STEINHART: But the

**01:14:27**

archive might be fair use. Right? It's also academic research. CHRISTINE LUTZ: You could argue it one way and someone could argue it another way. We actually have a copyright covering here at Rutgers. So, I have already been consulting on this and again, looking to see what other people are doing. We are collecting cover art, cover vinyl. AUDIENCE MEMBER #4: Some

**01:15:06**

of that music was brand new. I've been on WR2 for 35 years and I've got a lot of stuff. CHRISTINE LUTZ: Well we will talk. FRANK BRIDGES: Yeah I think what we're doing in some ways is kind of new but in other ways, like the Jazz Institute. Not at all like this was my idea but for me and the guy who was thinking inside of me was like, hey me, let's go do something. I was like well I could have gone to the local library. I could have done it on

**01:15:36**

my own or I could come to the library. It just so happens that the school that I go to is next door here. So, I think, I know Rutgers handles archives and I know they have important things like the Edison work and the jazz archive and all kinds of things. I know that they are professionals. I think that we are hitting issues. Not issues but new things like what we can provide. But what we've discovered

**01:16:06**

is now that we're doing our archive there's actually several other archives we've come across documenting local scenes that are just starting now. So our thought is just start to kind of work and think of the best practices and figure out what other schools are doing that will help along. Because right now, the school is a little concerned like, hey you know our idea is to take a bunch of records and just go a bit crazy and put them up on the Web. You know what you think about that? That kind of freaks them out a little bit. CHRISTINE LUTZ: The goal is really more for research. FRANK BRIDGES: The

**01:16:43**

goal is to make it all available and do whatever is possible. Whatever you want with it. The idea is to make it totally accessible. CHRISTINE LUTZ: For the general public. FRANK BRIDGES: As far as the digital aspect. From the analog, physical aspect, we hope to have a place that you can come look at. Now Rutgers, we're not fans of art, they have not built the building yet to hold this thing. So, we have some cardboard boxes

## **01:17:14**

and some forms and that's what we're starting with. Another nice thing that I also wanted to approach Rutgers with is that they got a shit load of money. They know how to get money. They are very good at that. We can talk about a lot of the bad things, but we are very good at getting grant money. So, that's something else that we're thinking about. We're kind of talking and Jim kind of joked about it and I want Jim to have a long, long, long, long, life, and Joe as well too, but partly. We are talking about the good

## **01:17:55**

things that people are making, but at some point, they move on and it's like a large collection of stuff that they could have. Talking to the Inside Beat, Dan, we were talking about the things that he records and interviews people. I mean those are really important. He could spend an hour with a musician but only use like two quotes. We would like to get access to those one day. At one point, you're not going to want those files and you will need to do something with the files and

## **01:18:26**

those are the real good materials we want to get. When I said the low hanging fruit, I'm talking about items that have been produced that we can get right now. Joe can say, I can give you one of each of these. Get a little tax write off or something. Interviews. Mechanical things. We were looking at the Punk archive, and Ronan is now in the running for that, they had the oddest thing that was donated to them. It was a pizza box with the set list from some

## **01:18:56**

discord band. So, the patches are really in the lead. That's a strong, odd thing to donate.

RONAN KAUFMAN: I have way weirder stuff. FRANK BRIDGES: We are open for things and yeah. I mean we couldn't tell you what it's going to look like, but we're hoping to build it and to get input from other people. RONAN KAUFMAN: I'd just like to make a point of that too. You know this is about music but so many of the people on you who are involved in music including myself did not really consider themselves musicians. Most of the people, including the people

## **01:19:26**

in bands, in my time, and my period the blip that was my group, music was like the excuse or the vehicle to get your shit out or to say something or to be heard or to feel heard or to have a minute that was just for you. To control a little bit of time. You don't have to be a great musician to play for three minutes and own that three minutes and be able to -- no one controls their time in their lives. But when you have a song and you know the change is coming

## **01:19:56**

now, there's a feeling about that and it's the same when you're listening. You're in control of that time. So, you know like I was I sang in a band I sang in a couple of bands but if people said, oh you're a musician? No, I'm not a musician. I'm just a kid who like was around some musicians and they let the kids who weren't good at being musicians join in and I think that the reason I bring that up is because we're talking about the ephemera. We're talking about patches and zines and things that aren't music but they're a part of that and they're

**01:20:26**

they're essential. I mean there is no punk scene anywhere without fanzines. It's not possible or at least it wasn't at one point. That was the document and so it'd be awesome if there was a stream of like all the New Brunswick music that ever came out but I think that a standalone section of all the other stuff is extremely important too and really unique. You know people like to scrapbook. JOSEPH STEINHART: No, I think that's a really good point. I wasn't sure how much you'd be talking about this stuff, but one of the things I want to mention was that The

**01:20:56**

Storm Shadow seven-inch came with like this much literature you know. I think also came with an Emma Goldman. Basically, this is my first exposure to Emma Goldman was when I bought the Storm Shadow seven-inch and for some reason it came with What Anarchy Is by Emma Goldman and then also this giant booklet of just like stuff about mental health, stuff about political issues. All records really came with stuff like that. The Degenerix one. So, if you just take the music, it is like Ronan said, it's just a bunch people screaming and stuff like [unintelligible]

**01:21:26**

you know. But what really changed my life about these records what was like what Ronan said. It was an excuse to actually say something really important. All of them come with all this stuff and then of course the fanzines that supported these records carried a lot of that off into the interviews. It was it really was one very intertwined culture and there was something really political about putting out the records. Like we are going to put these records out, just like Jim

was saying, people thought as his competition was the Aquarian, but he was like I don't give a crap about the Aquarian, this

### **01:21:57**

is some mainstream paper. Our competition for putting out records isn't other big industry record labels. It's political just putting out records, especially vinyl. In the early 90s. Vinyl is very cool now but putting out record on vinyl in the CD era was very political. It was like, no this is not for you. This is this is our space and stuff. RONAN KAUFMAN: That's exactly right. This is our space. People used to say that like we're creating a space. The space could be a physical space or it could be like a mental space

### **01:22:27**

where you know that the kid who's selling the zine over there whom you've never met, you have something in common with them because you have an aesthetic approach that is somehow similar. It's like Joe said you know these are so many of these records were less about the songs than it was about creating the space. People feel a need to have a space. We live in a time and a place where it's very difficult to feel like you have an opportunity to be heard, to speak, to be listened to. We stood around. We listened. One of the craziest things was that like all of our bands used to

**01:22:57**

talk a lot between songs. And there was always it's like shut up and play, but not usually in our group. Everyone was like listening you know like yeah, what do you have to say? JOSEPH STEINHART: And that's totally lost right. I was just thinking the things that are documented. It is true, you used to see a band in New Brunswick in the late 90s, early 2000s. You know they played a 30-minute set and 20 minutes would be talking and you people would be like, shut up, but the talking, especially is like a 15-year-old or 14-year-old that was like really. I was listening. I was way too naive, like, wow these guys

**01:23:29**

are really smart. They go to college and they're like talking about politics. But that was really impactful and that's just that's already lost. It's funny I can, Ronan probably too, I probably remember certain things people said that really just like stuck out, but at the same time that stuff is just lost and who knows how that's supposed to be archived. The best you can do is the interviews they did in the related fanzines and stuff like that where they kind of go into the songs a little more or the writing they put. Like again, there'd be full

**01:23:59**

descriptions of what the song's about and then there'd be like three lines of lyrics in some of these seven-inch and that was that's really important. For me at least why a lot of this mattered so much and why I stuck around and kept putting out records long into being an adult is because there was something really important. It wasn't just like good songs. You can hear those on the radio or probably not anymore, but at least you used to be able to. FRANK

BRIDGES: Was there another hand over here? AUDIENCE MEMBER #5: WRSU has brought it up before but I know there are two Rutgers radio

**01:24:34**

stations. One is associated directly with the school and one is independent. What role do you think local radio is going to play in terms of archiving this? I know there's a lot of new studios and sessions that are done at the local radio stations that bring these bands in.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Just about every Friday. JOSEPH STEINHART: Yeah PRB and FMU would also be bringing in a lot of the New Brunswick bands also even WNYC. Yeah, that's the NYU station right? AUDIENCE MEMBER #4: You have one right here. I

**01:25:05**

have a lot of stuff that I'd like to. JOSEPH STEINHART: But all those stations would be having sets from all the New Brunswick bands you know traveling an hour or so to play them. So not even just the ones on campus, but it's true there's a lot of material -- on air interviews. I had a radio show when I was in high school. I brought a lot of these bands on it and stuff and I probably have reels somewhere of them playing and stuff and so like yeah that's there's a lot of stuff to archive if you want to really think about it. Dr. Cosmo. Yeah that's right. I did it at PRB. FRANK BRIDGES: I



**01:25:42**

was a DJ at RSU, so one of the big things that made me want to put out music was the Mental Floss album that was put out. I was like, holy shit these are local bands on a record like how did they do it? This is like magic. I didn't have Google but I think, Simple Machines a little thing you could mail away and it told you how to make a record. So, you call some guys in Tennessee. Yeah

**01:26:13**

probably a lot of us used that. Yeah. So RSU was very. Also, Livingston, the Piscataway high school station was great as well too. Again, anything that's already been recorded we love to get that. I mean it would be nice like once we finally get going, which is probably going to take us a while, that maybe there could be something more instituted like oh if you have a band and you make a copy and then you can put it into the RU Core or something.

**01:26:43**

So, it's definitely thought of. A local music show is key. I mean I know when I was in band I had to get to the show. I'm going to be at the Melody. We had no Internet. So that was very helpful. A lot of people listened to at least RSU to find out about what shows were happening.

**01:27:14**

I was going to say he is hear, right. Brian Bruno was definitely impressed. He was, the co-creator of that. We were like, hey we're going to get up to Overnight Sensations and talk about the show. So again, very key. We only had a few chairs. Ironically there's an empty chair. So, I guess you could have been the fifth person. JIM TESTA: You were the fifth person. RONAN KAUFMAN: You're like the 12th man. FRANK BRIDGES: [unintelligible] BRIAN BRUNO: I

**01:27:49**

have to scoot, but before I go, having been in a band that was our first signed record was put out by your label. Yeah, I put you on the spot. FRANK BRIDGES: You want to make it about me, but I guess you're right. BRIAN BRUNO: Well was when I was listening to them talk about how what made them want to put out a label. I was thinking, why did you? FRANK BRIDGES: So, there was definitely a lot of things happening, and I don't want to like hearken back to

**01:28:20**

the nostalgia times, but there was like so many clubs, places like it was very fertile to get your band going. At the time there was this kind of odd moment. So, I was in a band and we were like we got to play shows. So, you need a demo cassette and it's like well I'm going to make 40 of those and I don't want them to be crappy so why don't I get some made. Then why don't we just make a record. Right. So that is how we will fool

**01:28:50**

people. So, you see all these bands in the early 90s and their labels are all 0 0 0 0 1. You know that that was their band they put out. JOSEPH STEINHART: Ambitious right. With all those zeros usually. Really ambitious with all those zeros. FRANK BRIDGES: Those are the things that we were concerned about. Definitely seeing the Mental Floss album and knowing that there was a scene and things going on. This is from the Wooden

**01:29:20**

Soldiers at a label down on Jersey Avenue called Hannibal Carthage Records. Which was. Owned by Joe Boyd. It was this American label that he ran. So right when this brought it up and I was like, hey Greg is in a band and he had a recording. Then it was like wow. Now I could put out another band. That would be great. You know I had no idea what I was doing. Again

**01:29:52**

there was this weird moment of like, you do vinyl? Do you do a CD? A lot of the stories I'm hearing here are these same ones. These are the things I want to document the oral history as well too because like you said, there's a music -- which is almost when you think about it like we should dump the word music for something else -- but there's the music, there's the things that went along with it, but then there's also these stories of making the music or going on tour and these are kind of. BRIAN BRUNO: One last thing. So

**01:30:22**

you have my permission. I get the EMI. I mean any of the bands that have been around the last 20 years you could probably get permission. So that would eliminate the copyright issue. There has to be a release or some kind of permission. FRANK BRIDGES: I would think so. BRIAN BRUNO: You better get it now. Like you said because people die. You're going to live forever. A hundred-year anniversary.

**01:30:54**

Now. I want that. I kind of want to ask them now. They need AUDIENCE MEMBER #6: I want to ask the panel their own opinions like why you think there's been a resurgence kind of fine. Like you said like there used to be like five record stores then there was none. Well now there's like one guy that's doing it with Spina. So why do you think it's been a thing recently? JIM TESTA: Well Joe has been pretty outspoken about this so, why don't you go first. JOSEPH STEINHART: Jim JOSEPH STEINHART: Jim, you

**01:31:25**

put it into context for me and I'll remember what I was outspoken about. JIM TESTA: You were saying it was driven by collector-ism. JOSEPH STEINHART: Oh yeah. OK. I think in some ways though it is a response to the Internet and people looking for something special. Then part of it I do think it has to do with the music industry finding ways to sell stuff and trying to make this collector, collectability aspect to it. I collect

**01:31:55**

records, but again it was more in the sense of like I want to have all these different items. So, I have my own personal archive and I can listen to these bands. Then when you're doing that for long enough you just kind of keep doing it. The industry has kind of created like a collectability like you're going to want to have this and a false sense. I guess I believe the industry is actually pushing it onto people in a way that they can stay relevant. I can extrapolate on that but that's

**01:32:26**

far outside the scope of the point of the panel. But I believe the broader music industry is sort of trying to force vinyl onto people because they know they can actually sell it for a much. They're making a higher markup now than they were almost in the CD era on a lot of this stuff. JIM TESTA: Yeah, when CD's came out they cost more than vinyl because they sounded better and now vinyl costs more than CSs because it sounds better. What I find interesting is that what we haven't seen is a concomitant rise in the sale of quality stereo equipment.

**01:32:56**

People are buying all these vinyl records and playing them on really crappy record players. You know those things that you buy at Urban Outfitters with you know needles that just kind of grind the plastic off your record. I just wonder how many of them are actually getting played, and how many of these look good on your coffee table or whatever. For the last five, six years it's the only part of the music industry that's been growing.

## **01:33:26**

Everything else is shrinking. The digital CDs everything. People aren't buying music. But the percentage of that little bit of a market keeps getting bigger. So, I don't know. People seem to like it. I wish they liked listening to it the way it's supposed to be heard too. JOSEPH STEINHART: I think originally a guy was saying the vinyl that was coming out on vinyl during the CD era really came out as a response. It's like we don't want anything to do with the corporate CD stuff.

RONAN KAUFMAN: There was a big anti-CD vibe. JOSEPH STEINHART: The

## **01:33:56**

idea wasn't it felt because it was it actually. Sorry, it didn't feel it was very authentic in that sense. You weren't putting out vinyl because you wanted to sell stuff. You were putting out vinyl because you really cared about the politics of the music. As a result, because it was authentic, the industry came in and tried to co-opt the authenticity and sell it back to you and they kind of have done that really well for the last 10, 15 years whenever this resurgence started. So, it's a little confusing now if you want to be the most authentic, I don't know, buy CDs. MARISSA: I think after being on for like 10 years

## **01:34:27**

we've always printed our new records in both vinyl and CD and I don't think. I'm sure a lot of people buy vinyl because it's collectability, but it's a pretty even split any given night behind the merch table, about 50/50, and I think it's really a matter of convenience and how you live your life. I appreciate vinyl. I like it because of the physicality of it. I like it because the art is bigger but because of the way I live my life

**01:34:57**

it's impractical for me to -- I'm never home. I can't sit at home and listen to a record. So oftentimes people will buy the record because they like having it and they like looking at it and touching it and sometimes sitting at home listening to it, but they always are going to be like Is there a digital download. And that's because everybody has a different routine that they go through every day and I don't think it matters what format you listen to your music on. JOSEPH STEINHART: But since then you're saying that only because again we're where you came from. Yeah. When, as a band again, when

**01:35:27**

I was younger, Jim kind of came before this. There was just only vinyl. MARISSA: This is like a political act. JOSEPH STEINHART: Now it's just digital. Ronan and I, even though we're separate in age, I think vinyl really was this political thing. We're going to put out something that is intentionally obscure, you have to really work hard to listen to it. They're not going to sell it in any of the big record stores and so it was like this is our thing and we're going to create our own channels for distribution and that was really, really important. Now I do it because I've run a record label and I just like I put on all the formats, but for the same reason you make CDs. I think CDs are more

**01:35:57**

and more subversive every day, which is weird. MARISSA: We could do eight-tracks or laser discs. JOSEPH STEINHART: Well eight-tracks actually suck. You know as like a format. MARISSA: I've never heard one. I just want to be radical. RONAN KAUFMAN: My buddy Zach helps run a label called Chunksaah Records which is the label that Bouncing Souls started many years ago,

as was said before, just to put out their own records. It was named after their friend Timmy Chunks and the reason they called it Chunksaah was because when he said his name, "My name is Timmy Chunksaah." So that's how they

### **01:36:27**

named their record label. But my friend Zach who basically runs the daily operations for that company and for a vinyl company called Pirates' Press and they do they do large pressings for big Hollywood properties and when you buy like a nice Jay-Z gate-fold cover, they're probably doing it. Personally, I can't stand vinyl. I think it's heavy, fragile and takes up a lot of space. I'm really not into it. I sold all my vinyl years ago. I'm not kidding. I can't stand it. JOSEPH STEINHART: I bought a lot of Jim's vinyl, but I think he was moving. RONAN KAUFMAN: I

### **01:36:58**

will also say that like I'm naturally skeptical of totems and trinkets and fetishized items. I think that my friend Zach, the reason I brought up Zach, is because he put out a record by a band and it was a seven-inch and the inside of the slip cover was sandpaper. So, the first time you pulled the record out destroyed it. That I can get behind because that's like a situation it's kind of like you know, here's something interesting. Or he did

### **01:37:29**

another one that had like basically barbed wire attached to the sleeves so you got cut. So, I think he was doing these things sort of as a statement against sort of like the fetishization of the object and you know. There was always this other argument too that like you know a record



is really just a secondary substitute for a live performance and like when you make a record you're trying to capture the live performance. Now I don't know if that's necessarily true because there are things you can do with records that you can't do on a live performance and so it

### **01:37:59**

really did evolve past that. But for my friends and I, that first version was really what we were going for we were trying to you know hit record, blast it off and hit stop. And that's what you captured. If your voice cracked that's what happened on the recording and it's fine. If you missed a note, if you were slightly out of tune, keep it because that's what it would be like if you were in a VFW hall you know in 100 degrees throwing up on yourself. JOSEPH STEINHART: Public Image Limited had that LP with sandpaper on the outside,

### **01:38:30**

so it destroyed the records next to it. Only the first pressing. RONAN KAUFMAN: But I think my point is just like always sort of like I can be very sentimental and every time I find myself attached to like an object I immediately am like this is just an object. The idea is what's important not the object. We put our ideas into the object, but that's us doing it. JIM TESTA: I had thousands of records because I get them for free. I

**01:39:00**

also used to buy quite a few, but. JOSEPH STEINHART: A lot of them but Bradley's price tags on them too. JIM TESTA: Yeah. I used to buy quite a few, but they were sitting there in my spare room and I just never had time to play any of them. I said, I don't want to get morbid but I'm thinking like I'm going to die someday and like someone's going to throw these out, so let me find people who are actually like. Joe and a friend

**01:39:31**

of his, Brian, said you know we'll take him off your hands and I know he'll listen to them and love them. JOSEPH STEINHART: We paid fairly well. MARISSA: I think in terms of like a conversation about format it's like everyone should seek to get exactly what they want out of art no matter what kind it is, so if you need to look. If you feel moved looking at a print of a Frida Kahlo painting and that for you is enough, then that's enough. If you have to go to MoMA and look at a Frida Kahlo painting to really like

**01:40:02**

get into it, then that's what you need. I think the same goes for music. Either you need to go see the band or, and it's different for all forms of art. It's like you know books included if you just want to look at it on a tablet. Go ahead. If that makes you happy. You know it's like my band has always just wanted to be accessible to everybody because we care about our music. And I think accessibility for us in itself is like a radical act because I don't think a lot of bands

**01:40:33**

or at least our immediate contemporaries at the beginning had the kind of like opportunity and wherewithal to provide an audience with that accessibility. We were really lucky in that we could. So, we did and that's what we continue to embrace. RONAN KAUFMAN: Marissa, I think you're lucky in another way which is that you know 20 years ago the bands that were making a lot of this music it wasn't even a concept that they could make a living or spend substantial time or have an income or you know run their

**01:41:03**

life off of this. It was not even a thought and then it happened to a couple bands and then of course that changes the track where everyone's like, oh no, I don't want to be a rock star for a living. The difference is that now many more people do have that opportunity and that's obviously a good thing. You know people should be able to make a living off their art. I just think that that the difference is that like now you know you have a shot. MARISSA: It depends how you define a living right. Thanks

**01:41:33**

Dad. AUDIENCE MEMBER #6: Another question. Sorry to put you on the spot, but my question is for Marissa. As someone who has like self-released records. I see like a lot of bands today who are moving over to vinyl primarily [unintelligible]. Because it is cheaper. So, to musicians starting

**01:42:03**

out today trying to get out their first release, would you say that it's important to keep the cost and try to release a physical record, whatever your method is. Whether it is a cassette or?

MARISSA: Yeah. I mean my band is very much like a touring band and I think our band persona is anchored in that we tour heavily. We have played over a thousand shows. So

**01:42:35**

having something that an audience member can leave with as a relic of having attended your show and seeing you band is important. Otherwise it's. And it also pays for gas and food and if you're in a hard spot maybe lodging. So, it has a utilitarian and very practical use and if you don't have those things you just play music and then you leave. What if the show is really crummy and you're in the middle

**01:43:05**

of Wyoming and you have 13 dollars and no gas? That sucks. This is just very practical stuff that has nothing to do with romanticizing art or whatever at all. This is like you know running a quote, unquote business or just at least feeding yourself properly and making sure you're safe and your bandmates as well. JIM TESTA: Unless you're Taylor Swift and Pepsi is underwriting your tour. The economics

**01:43:35**

of touring have always relied very heavily on that you know. I mean T-shirts and records and stuff, that's how people like Marissa get to stay in a band. MARISSA: I would say bite the bullet and make the investment. JIM TESTA: If you're going to tour. MARISSA: Yeah you have to you have to go on tour. I'm sorry. JIM TESTA: I just did, among other things, I do a podcast for Jersey Beat. I just interviewed with Craig Finn from The Hold Steady

**01:44:06**

and I asked him. He lives in Brooklyn and so he sees a lot of young bands and I said give me some advice and he said leave town. You have to go on the road. You have to play for people who don't give a good goddamn who you are and you have to make those people care about your band and you'll never be a good band until you go out on the road and you do that. So if you're serious about yourself, serious about your band then you have to tour. JOSEPH STEINHART: I want to stand up for the reverse opinion. Just to second to both of you.

**01:44:37**

It all depends what your goal is. MARISSA: He is terrible on tour. JOSEPH STEINHART: No. No. No. If your goal is like they're saying to kind of like get you know a lot of success and a popular band that's that you do have to get on the road and possibly make physical things, but sometimes the goal of a band is just to make something that's important to a small group of people. That doesn't mean it's any less important to those people than something that sells a million records or something else 10,000 records or a band that tours. There are bands that have played six shows that I have a cassette of from a long time to go. They are some of my

**01:45:07**

favorite songs that never left me and I'll do anything to keep those songs like in my life and the record would never sell like ever. The band didn't do anything. It's not even a band I ever find someone to talk about, but those are some of most important things like in my world. If it's important to me than it's like a real thing to me. So, it depends on what your goal is with the band, but I think too often people sort of define like success for the band as a how many you've sold and how many people you've reached. That's only one goal

**01:45:37**

but if that is your goal then yeah, you've got it already. JIM TESTA: But even if your goal was only getting better. If its only realization is just being the best band I can be then I think touring is something you have to seriously think about. JOSEPH STEINHART: Join the Army. MARISSA: I don't think your music would be of any less worth if you travelled or not. I'm just saying if you decided to pay out of pocket then replicate. JOSEPH STEINHART: You don't need to travel. That's what I'm saying. You don't need to travel and if you want to do what you're doing, yeah you have to travel, but some people want to just make like music for

**01:46:08**

a time of their life and that's important and that's like worth it. MARISSA: I am agreeing with you. RONAN KAUFMAN: There's a tension between art and entertainment here. You know this is where, are you in a band because you're an artist or are you in a band because you're an entertainer? For most I think the truth is somewhere in between. There's a gray area. But the reality is that I know plenty of people who were quite content to play to 15 people. You know they drove all night to get to this place in West Virginia and there were 15 people in the room

and you know what, they played like there were fifteen hundred people. The difference was that at the end

### **01:46:38**

of the set, like Jim said, you have to think about what your outcomes are. I remember seeing a band played a room I'll never forget this. I saw a band played a room about I don't know, there were like eight or nine people in the room. It was an extremely political band. Everyone was from out of town including us. The band played. There was no one there and the band played a song about child abuse. The singer made an impassioned statement before he played the song. They played the song. It was super intense and after that I saw a kid

### **01:47:08**

from the crowd beeline the singer of the band and they stood in the corner of that room for probably an hour and a half talking and I'll guarantee you that they were talking about child abuse because I was observing the tone. I knew the singer. I'd seen this before and so it really depends on like what you want to get out of this. If you make music because you want to be a rock star and be famous and wealthy and all these things, then there are things you're going to have to do. If you're interested in making art by yourself

### **01:47:38**

in your room for the six people that you can get to listen that's fine too. But there is a tension there, no matter what, between art and entertainment and they're not always compatible. This is why so many bands and so many musicians have such a shitty time once they find success,

because the things that you need to do to satisfy the entertainment industry are not the things that satisfy artists in many cases; and are anathema to the things that satisfy artists. JIM TESTA: I will also say if you're just starting out,

**01:48:08**

if there are already bands here they're looking for advice and you're not to the point where you're touring yet and you want to get out, you want to get in the Aquarian or the Targum or Jersey Beat or whatever, you don't need product. You can send us, most writers today prefer, we all have rooms piled to the ceiling with CDs and records. So just do a Bandcamp page. Do it professionally. Put all the information people need on that and then send that out and that'll get

**01:48:38**

the word out there. That'll get your name out there. MARISSA: I was just going to say that I never had any intention of playing music becoming my J.O.B. It's still really isn't because I can't support myself solely on whatever I make in playing in my band as an adult.

**01:49:09**

I think what Ronan said is interesting because I don't really consider myself to be an entertainer, but I play like over 100 shows a year. I also never really wanted to be a rock star and I don't feel like a rock star, and I hope I don't come off as a rock star. Because that would make me feel awful about myself. So, it is a weird line I guess to walk along and there are a lot of people who share that lifestyle with me. I suppose people who



**01:49:39**

kind of like navigate in between a subculture and playing larger clubs. Just a little footnote.

FRANK BRIDGES: Awesome footnote and I think that's going to wrap it up. I'm looking at the time. MARISSA: Yeah, it's over. FRANK BRIDGES: First of all, we have a reception outside so help yourself to -- if the order came our correctly -- fruit, cookies and some coffee.

**01:50:14**

There's a sign-in sheet that helps us pay for this so we need to know the attendance. I would super like to thank the whole panel for coming today and sharing all of their ideas and thoughts and also a round of applause for the audience because I think these are the folks who are going to help build archives as well. So, thank you.