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A free zine by MAL  
An zine saor le MAL

# IRELAND IN THE YEAR 202X:

We're all under threat from plagues, climate collapse and the prospect of a full-blown war between nuclear powers, all of which are linked. what's this zine about then? punk music. look, nothing wrong with a bit of entertainment.

this is the zine of PUNC, the Irish punk rock radio show on Belfield FM, UCD's student radio station. You've heard us, now you can read us.

Everything you know and love from the radio show is here - the news, reviews and interviews about punk music from Ireland, the unfunny jokes, the baseless speculation and the recurring fixation on what U2 are up to. So while the radio show is off air during the summer, this zine can give you all the nutrients you'd otherwise have been deprived of. Isn't that great?

This zine was written by me, DJ MAL, the host of PUNC: the Irish punk rock radio show. DJ MAL is not my real name but Ireland is a very small country so you can probably figure out who I am fairly quick if you really want to.

# NEWS & VIEWS & UNSUBSTANTIATED RUMOUR

At the time of going to press, I learned that Cathal Coughlan had died. One of the great talents in Irish music, may he rest in peace.

Upcoming Gigs: the Love Buzz (May 27th), Kerbdog (May 27th & 28th), Vulpynes (June 12th), Jesus Piece (June 16th), Chewie (June 17th), Napalm Death (July 2nd), SLF (August 19th).

Dublin Punk Untold is a new radio documentary miniseries on Near FM (90.3 FM). It's a history of the early days of punk music in Ireland, presented by Neil Farrelly. The first part has been broadcast and you can listen to it on their website, two more parts to come. Pete Holiday is in it, he's been on PUNC too...

Speaking of PUNC, check out our redesigned website ([punc.neocities.org](http://punc.neocities.org)). We'll be adding more episodes of the show soon (touch wood) as well as some summer playlists & mixes. A pride month punk playlist is in the works among other things.

Zine credits: Thanks a million to Sos from CHEWIE for doing a big interview. Thanks to Erin for providing that horrible Bono article (see inside zine for more details). Thanks to MCR for providing a big day out for all the emos this week. That's it unless I've forgotten someone important in which case thanks to you...

# MY CELTIC ROMANCE: IS EMO ICON GERARD WAY AN IRISH REPUBLICAN? WE INVESTIGATE



**One of these men is an Irish revolutionary. One of these men is the lead singer in MCR. But can you tell which is which?**

Your humble reporter doesn't know too many songs by My Chemical Romance, but she's always found that charming ditty TEENAGERS to be very catchy. What with My Chem reuniting and coming to Ireland, I thought I'd give it a listen for the first time in a good long while. For the first time I really listened to the lyrics in the first verse, and I realised that there was a shocking connection between them and the intellectual legacy of the 1916 rebels.

Let me explain. The first verse of "Teenagers" seems to be about how schools destroy the souls of their students. The first verse ends with the words "They're going to rip up your heads/Your aspirations to shreds/Another cog in the murder machine". Now you might think that's all very standard. But who coined the usage of the phrase murder machine, specifically with regards to the education system? It was Irish Christo-pagan Republican revolutionary Patrick Pearse, that's who.

## GERARD WAY, IRISH REPUBLICAN? OUR REPORT CONTINUES

Back in nineteen-clickety-clack, Patrick Pearse wrote an essay called "The Murder Machine" about how the Irish education system under British rule was destroying the souls of its students. Sound familiar at all?? It might seem unlikely that a New Jersey band would quote one of the leaders of the 1916 Rising in a song. But then again, one of the few things I know about My Chemical Romance is that they made a reference to Black Grape in the lyrics to "Na Na Na". Black Grape are just some random indie-hiphop-rave band that were kind of successful in the UK. If MCR know who Shaun Ryder is it doesn't seem crazy to me that they would know who Patrick Pearse is. And Americans love Irish stuff, don't they?

Is this old news? Am I late to the game? Maybe hardcore MCR fans are reading this and thinking of all the other references to Irish Republican history and ideology in the lyrics of MCR. So here's my call to action. IF YOU are a hardcore MCR fan, please do one of these two things. One, let us know if you find any other references to Irish Republicanism in the lyrics or music videos of MCR, no matter how tenuous. Two, if at all possible, ask the band members if they've secretly been obsessed with Irish history the whole time and are totally on board for a united Ireland. The people want to know. Updates will follow in the next issue of PUNC.

**MAL SAYS:** I think that if Gerard Way really is an Irish Republican then he should change his name to Gearróid Uí Veigh. And they should do a new version of the Black Parade but make it about Easter parades. And the band would have to stop wearing those military jackets because they do look kind of imperialist even though they're obviously marching band jackets. And they'd have to get a bodhrán player. And put some songs on the new album about the Irish Language Act. They might get banned from touring Br\*tain though.

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FOR HOW MUCH LONGER  
CAN WE TOLERATE

**OHOT PRESS** ?



Bono: Wanted to resume the band's world tour

U2 singer Bono has told how he induced his wife's labour with their new son by showing her a scary video.

The star played her the gory Australian movie *Chopper*, hoping it would hasten the birth.

Bono said he was determined to be around when the baby was born, but also wanted to continue with the band's world tour.

*Chopper*, which features a vicious criminal, was made by a friend of Bono's.

His new son, John Abraham Hewson, was born in May during a short gap in North American tour dates.

Bono told *Q* magazine: "My wife Ali has an aversion to violent films, so she thought if she put on *Chopper*, which is made by a friend of ours, it might do the trick.

"And indeed it did. We got to the hospital 20 minutes before the baby was born - 20 minutes. She's an extraordinary girl."

The band are set to play gigs in Britain and Ireland next month.

Bono said it was tough being on the road while his fourth child was developing.

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Links to more North Ireland stories are a foot of the page.

Subvert All Power. Subvert All Systems.  
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# CHEW ON THAT!

Below is an interview I did with Sos from CHEWIE, self described "punk lifestyle influencers". CHEWIE are a Dublin band (FKA Chewing On Tinfoil) and they play a great gig. We talked about their current activities and plans, the economics of being a touring band these days and a whole lot of other things that have nothing to do with their music. But we did eventually talk about their music too - read on to find out...

**Note:** some edits have been made for clarity and ease of reading, as well as to make me seem cooler and funnier.

**MAL:** So, what have you been up to?

**Sos:** We've been working on a new album for the past few years. This stuff takes a lot longer these days as we've all got other things going on in our lives that take priority, but we spent the years of 2016 - 2018 writing the songs and then we started recording it towards the end of 2018. We did one session where we tracked the music for 7 of the 13 songs live and then in April 2019 we did another session to get the music for the remaining 6 songs tracked.

Then Westy came in and laid down keys over everything as he has been living in different countries in Europe for the past however many years.

The vocals would have been chipped away at over a few shorter sessions over the space of 2019 and then everything came to a halt in 2020 when Covid kicked off. It turned out to not be the worst thing ever because it gave us a chance to sit on the album for some time and really see how we felt about certain aspects of it, which led to some vocals being re-recorded or extra layers of guitars being laid down and other stuff like that. We had a few mixing days once the lockdown restrictions eased, and I suppose a nice thing about Covid dictating the pace of how we worked on it was that we haven't felt rushed into getting it out or anything - like we can just do everything in a manner that's comfortable for us.

We just got the final masters back last month, and it's probably the happiest we've all been with anything we've done to date - both in terms of the songs we've written for it and how it sounds as a finished product. The live recording really helped bridge the gap between how we usually sound on recordings and how we sound when we play live, like the tones of our instruments are pretty much exactly what they sound like through an amp on stage, and the fact that 4 out of the 5 of us were playing the music all together in the studio really captures a certain energy that you sometimes lose when everything is multi-tracked if that makes sense.

There's some slight imperfections in our playing across certain tracks that would probably only get picked up by the person who played it or someone who's listening really closely, but that keeps a bit more of a human feel to the recording I think.

..like, it's an honest account of how we played that specific take of the song on that specific day, which to me is a lot more appealing to listen to than something that has had all the kinks ironed out through a rigorous amount of overdubbing (or whatever) to achieve a level of tightness that in turn sacrifices a lot of the character of the recording itself.

We've still got to sort out artwork and all that stuff, which in hindsight would have been a good idea to be working on while we were finishing off the musical component of the album, but sometimes that's just the way she goes. We should probably also message some labels about seeing if anyone would be up for releasing it, but we're oftentimes not the easiest sell. I'm guessing labels will want to work with bands that are out on tour for a fair chunk of the year which is just not something that we can really do due to where we are in our lives. We still manage a few weekend trips to the UK every now and again and have been talking to a couple of people in mainland Europe about some gigs that hopefully we'll be able to make happen once the album is out, but the trips will be much shorter than the usual 3-4 week blocks that other bands do be heading out for.

M: How did ye decide to take this approach? You aren't going to do intensive touring, you're putting your own lives first...

S: That happened more naturally rather than it being a case of something that was discussed and decided, really. I suppose there were a few factors that dictated how actively we could pursue playing gigs outside of the country, even stuff like not having our own van or the cost of ferry fares influences those things in a way. It'd be much easier to play all the way up and down the UK a lot more regularly if we didn't have to drop €500 on a ferry each time, but it does make the few trips that we manage a little bit more enjoyable when they're a less regular event maybe? On top of that we've got a couple of kids to look after, mortgages to pay, businesses to run, and jobs to keep, so the idea of extensive touring was something that never would have really gotten off the ground even if there was the interest. I think we're all really happy with where we're at now though - there's a handful of promoters that we do gigs with that have become really good friends of ours because they've put the effort and work in to ensure that the gigs in each respective city are as enjoyable as they can be, both for ourselves and the people that go to them, and that's huge for us. We've had our fill of showing up for a midweek gig in some place where about 10 people show up and the promoter barely speaks to you, never mind feeding you or setting you up with a place to sleep for the night - so it's nice that our weekend trips to the UK these days have been whittled down to just the ones where we know we're going to have a good time and see some pals.

M: You go where you're wanted.

S: Pretty much the nail on the head there. We do get a fair amount of messages from people from the US who like our band asking us to come over and play in their state, but I think they often don't really realise how prohibitively expensive that kind of excursion would be. We generally just advise them to book a trip to Ireland for around the time of Good Friday as we have that gig every year in the Workman's (I think it's even booked for the next 5 years straight already), and sometimes you get the odd one here and there who actually takes the advice and makes the trip over and has a class time and a nice little holiday to top it all off. We had one person come up to us and tell us that she had travelled from Arizona to Dublin for the last RGF, and also managed to plan the trip to include being able to get to the two Jeff Rosenstock gigs in Whelan's that we were running earlier that week too, which was deadly to hear. And no doubt she got to see a much better gig than had we come to Arizona ourselves and played a gig that maybe she wouldn't have even heard about.

M: Do you think the economics of touring put a lot of pressure on independent bands?

S: Yeah I mean it's probably well past the point of being prohibitively expensive for newer bands to get out there nowadays really. I remember times when we could rent a van & driver for like £80 a day. We'd go as foot passengers on a ferry and meet them in Holyhead. Those days are long gone unless you've got a mate who can do you a solid and is up for the trip. I think the last time I looked at van rental in Ireland it was probably upwards of €200 per day and that's without paying for a driver or TM. These days we just cram into my Corolla and bring just our instruments / drum breakables and amp heads and then get a lend of the rest of the backline from the bands we're playing with. That goes back to the importance of having good friendships with the promoters and bands that we've met over the years too, like if you're a brand new band looking to go out on tour you likely don't have such a valuable resource like that to make things a little easier. Of course there are some bands that will be lucky enough to have financial backing from the jump, whether someone has rich parents or they're in receipt of like an arts council grant or whatever - and fair enough really. There would have been a time where I was so embittered about that sort of stuff but the older I get the less I give a rats, really. It's the type of thing that's completely out of anyone else's control so there's not much point in feeling any sort of way about it I guess.

M: It's the game, not the players.

S: Yeah. And I can't say that I wouldn't be the same either - like, if I win the Euromillions I'm absolutely going to be bankrolling every last one of my friend's bands and have them going around in Nightliners and all that craic. The same goes for the public funding stuff too, like if you bothered to go to all the trouble of applying for something like that and you end up getting it, absolutely fair play to you and hopefully it helps you get the ball rolling in some meaningful way.

M: I think that kind of brings us onto the state of Irish music today. If you compare the Irish punk scene now with the scene 10 years ago, what's changed? What's stayed the same?

S: In short - not all that much has changed. The bands and the gigs are still as class as they were back then, and at the end of the day that's all that truly matters. It would probably be a bit disingenuous for me to carry on like I'm still as much of an active participant as I would have been 10 years ago. I just don't have as much free time or expendable income nowadays compared to before I had a kid, when I was only paying my slice of the rent in a house share, etc. I'm not as clued in on the inner workings of Dublin's DIY punk scene now as I perhaps would have been back then - that's my way of saying that if I end up talking some serious amount of pony here, then please take it with many many grains of salt. One thing I can tell you for sure is that there are way less venues to play than there were 10 years ago, and particularly so on the DIY end of the scale. Jigsaw (FKA Seomra Spraoí) closing down would have been a very tough one for the DIY scene as it was one of the last few spots in Dublin that you could run BYOB gigs in, and had a long history of hosting so many great punk gigs. The Barricade Inn filled that void although only for a brief spell, and you'd only very rarely hear of a BYOB gig in Dublin now. As far as your more traditional venues go, they now cost more to rent and are harder to actually get a booking for the night you want than they would have been before. There's more and more touring acts being booked every year and with stuff like BIMM opening up in the last decade, naturally you have a lot more bands forming and getting straight down to business with getting gigs booked in decent venues, which all adds to the increase in demand in a city that's short in supply of places for bands to play. And you can't blame them either, it's class that more touring bands are coming through Dublin nowadays, and the BIMM bands are literally just college kids who were lucky enough to get to do a course in how to effectively navigate the very murky waters of being in a band, and realistically the only head start they have on a band that's formed somewhat more organically is that they picked up some notes from a lecturer on the many mistakes that you can make early on in your bands lifespan. So fair play really.

Maybe one of the things that has stayed the same that I've noticed is that you still see the odd gig advertised for €5 cash on the door. To me that's insane, considering when I first started going to DIY gigs in 2005, it was a fiver on the door. I can't imagine how I'd be able to make a gig work at €5 between paying the venue rental and wanting to pay the bands well, but there are people running gigs that just want everything to happen for as minimal a cost as possible and I'm always going to have the most amount of respect for that. But I also think that you could bump the door price to €10 and still do the cheaper rate for unwaged people who want to go, and then you're able to put a bit more money into the pockets of the people who made the gig happen. Like more money going into the pockets of the bands or whoever's on sound that night can't be a bad thing can it? When you think of the costs that come along with just being in a band...

S: ...practice space rental or even getting your gear to the venue in a taxi or whatever - it's surely nice to know that the money you paid in to the gig as a punter is going towards helping them pay for more practices or like recording their next release or something.

M: Yeah, bands can't live hand to mouth. Have the more mainstream/bigger venues been charging more since COVID, or had the fees been creeping up before then? Are bands eating the costs the venues incurred during the lockdowns?

S: No. To be fair, I think it was before Covid kicked off that the rental fees were due to go up, and on top of that every one of those venues that we would have done our gigs in (Whelan's, Workman's, Grand Social etc) have all been very sound to us over the years. Staff are great, the bookers are lovely to deal with, and we've mostly been paired up with house engineers that give a shit about making us sound good over the PA so hats off. I think most of them were subsidised by the government anyway so there wouldn't have been all that many costs incurred aside from loss of bar profits, I'm guessing? Obviously it was a shit one for all the venue staff, who were laid off as soon as it was apparent that gigs were going away for a while, of course. But yeah, I haven't noticed a massive hike in venue rental since the gigs started happening again, although it's definitely gone up since this time 10 years ago.

M: I'm now realising that I've gone this whole interview without actually asking ye about anything to do with your music. Do you think the new tracks you've been recording mark a change in your sound? I know you've been moving away from the ska sound ye started out with...or do I have it all wrong?

S: I suppose it's a bit of a "yes and no" sort of situation there, depending on which way you look at it. The new stuff probably doesn't represent as much of a change in sound, if you like our music for being just kind of decent punk stuff with some really nice pop sensibilities and good lyrics and all that crap. If you liked our music mainly because we used to play a lot of upstrokes then maybe the new stuff won't really be your bag, although there is a track that's kind of based in a reggaeton groove that's fairly bouncy. If I was to make a comparison to our previous output though, I'd just say that on the whole it's better. I feel like we get better at writing music together with every song that we write. I feel like on this new record we've probably tried out a few different sounds that we haven't on previous releases, in terms of strumming/playing patterns or drum beats or what have you, but I think the main driving force behind that comes from us not wanting to feel like we're rehashing the same old ideas from older material and just dressing it up differently and hoping that nobody will notice. Obviously, you're going to have the reuse certain chord progressions every once in a while - but I don't think the album has any two songs that sound similar to anything on it, or anything that we've put out before. That's probably got a good bit to do with why we're so excited about it as well - because it's so fresh. That bundled together with the fact that it's our best sounding record in terms of production, and that the lads just get better and better as songwriters and lyricists as time goes by really just has us so so proud of this release.

That said though, just because there's not really any ska on this one doesn't mean that one of the boys won't come into the practice room with an absolute upstroke banger when we get back into writing mode, and if it's a banger then we're obviously going to work it out into as good a song as we can make it.

M: That definitely makes sense. Are there any tracks in particular you're looking forward to people hearing?

S: Honestly, just all of it. There's not one track on the whole album that I don't feel incredibly excited about, and I know that can be a cop out answer, but this isn't a case of any old band on a big indie label with a decent PR budget just trying to find a sly way of saying "buy our new album it's all hits!" in every interview they can. I guess you could say that we're all probably really looking forward to seeing which ones really resonate with people when the time comes for playing most of the new stuff in our set. It feels like we've been rinsing the Marrowbone / Shaving / Goalposts material for so long now that it's going to be class to have a bunch of new stuff that people will hopefully be familiar enough with by the time we get around to playing our first gig once the album is released that it won't be just us blowing our voices out.

M: Can you give us a hint of what we might hear on the album?

S: In terms of what you might hear on the album - you'll hopefully hear all 13 songs if we can hold your attention for that long. You'll hear some different flavours of sound throughout the ~journey~ but you'll also hear that it's still very much a Chewie joint. You'll hear a fair few lyrics that will make you laugh to yourself and probably just as many that will make you feel sad or uncomfortable. You'll probably even hear a few that make you feel empowered or motivated or any of those sorts of feelings that do be going on sometimes. You'll hear a couple of really really excellent vocal features. You'll hear a few seconds of a chord swell effect thing that I spent €200+ on the pedal that helps make the sound, which I have more than made my money back on at this stage considering how good it sounds. You'll hear some really great bass and guitar tones. You'll hear some really beautiful, delicate piano playing. You'll hear some really smart drum fills that sit really well with how the vocals flow. You'll hear a few honest mistakes that you probably might even think are intentional, and the ones that don't will probably just sound endearing to you because it sounds like we haven't been trying to lie to you and act like we don't make many many mistakes in life the whole time. You'll hopefully hear enough stuff that'll make you want to keep coming to our gigs at the very least. Actually, the real hope is that you'll hear enough stuff to make you want to have it in your vinyl collection I think. I feel like we're gonna try and go exotic with the pressing so it would be nice to shift a few instead of having them piled up in my spare room for a couple of years...

M: When you say exotic, you mean...?

S: I mean like, pulling out all the stops so that actually owning the record is a worthwhile endeavour for people. Like, doing my best to have us be able to offer up a record that is as visually stunning as possible so that it feels that there is a very fair exchange of money and product happening between us and the people who support us by buying our records.

S: ...Something that would have people rather pull it out of their Kallax and listen to on a turntable than just stream on spotify or whatever.

M: A record that's not just another format people can listen to your music on but a beautiful object in its own right.

S: Yeah, exactly. It kind of pisses me all the way off when bands put the least amount of effort into a physical product and then still look for €20 off of you. Give me a break with that carry on. You're already taking a fairly deep financial plunge with getting vinyl pressed in the first place, so why not try to make it something that someone is actually stoked to own?

M: When streaming is so convenient I suppose CDs and vinyl need other selling points to encourage customers, and it gives bands another way to express themselves to their listeners.

M: We'll leave it there. Thanks for the interview...

CHEWIE play June 17th in Whelan's with Girlfriend on support. Tickets are available via [chewie.ie](http://chewie.ie).

## BONUS: QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS!

Q: KETCHUP OR MAYO?

Was going to say ketchup cos it's the absolute classic but I feel like I use mayo in more stuff so I'm going with that.

Q: NORTHSIDE OR SOUTHSIDE?

Northside forever. Even though I've been living on the southside for the past 10+ years.

Q: CATS OR DOGS?

Dogs for me, but I really wouldn't want to pick sides.

Q: FAVOURITE IRISH PUNK BAND?

Favorite active band - girlfriend. What a seriously good band filled with savage people who take great ideas and hammer them out into magnificent songs. I hope they're around for years and years.

All time favourite: Kidd Blunt. Incredibly influential and eye opening for me at an early age. Instrumental in having me go all in on the DIY thing, and without them I probably wouldn't be doing music in any capacity whatsoever.

Think this zine is great? Think it sucks? Well either way you should contribute something to this zine! Help us keep up our high standard/improve on our feeble rubbish (delete as appropriate) by sending us an article, an interview, a poem, a photo, a news item or anything at all you come up with. You'll receive full credit and a share of whatever money we make, if any. If YOU want to be famous for five seconds and have something in this zine, you can e-mail me at [punc@tuta.io](mailto:punc@tuta.io) OR DM me on instagram @punc\_fm. For episodes of the PUNC radio show and assorted audio/visual nonsense, visit our website, [punc.neocities.org](http://punc.neocities.org).

See you next time,

your editor,

the mysterious DJ MAL