

ISSUE 05.26

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**Pitchfork**

# MUSIC FESTIVAL

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Iceage / yeule / Arooj Aftab / The Armed

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Jeff Parker & the New Breed

*Sunday*

**The Roots / Toro y Moi / Earl Sweatshirt**

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# WHY SETTLE FOR LIMITED REACH

## When You Can Approach Full Audience Penetration?!

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By Todd Evans

LGBTQ media offers advertisers a uniquely efficient way to reach highly engaged consumers. *Why settle for limited reach when you can approach full audience penetration?*

Recent analysis published in **MediaVillage** revealed that nearly 90% of the 7,000 campaigns studied achieved less than 20% reach. This is striking, given that many brands actively seek defined consumer segments, such as trendsetters, urban audiences, specific income groups, and lifestyle categories. Ironically, these same segments often overlap significantly with LGBTQ consumers, yet brands frequently overlook LGBTQ media as a primary channel.

LGBTQ media, across print and digital platforms, functions as one of the most targeted and efficient information channels available. Unlike general-market media, it is clearly identifiable, highly targeted, and largely insulated from incidental exposure.

**There is no broadcast television component, and most LGBTQ digital platforms are extensions of established print brands.**

As a result, the audience is intentional and self-selecting, delivering an exceptionally high concentration of genuinely interested consumers. Advertisers are not paying for wasted impressions.

The effectiveness of LGBTQ media is especially evident in categories such as healthcare. For example, awareness and adoption of PrEP (HIV prevention) would have been significantly slower and more costly without LGBTQ media serving as the primary conduit for education and engagement. While television campaigns can broaden reach, they do so at a much higher cost and with considerable audience dilution, often missing the consumers most in need of the message.

For brands seeking consumers who are engaged, trend-driven, frequent travelers, spirits purchasers, or those with higher

discretionary income, particularly male audiences, LGBTQ media should be a strategic priority. Advertising in this space delivers near-total relevance, strong cost efficiency, and the added benefit of directly supporting the community you aim to reach.

**Todd Evans is President and CEO of Rivendell Media**, America's leading LGBTQ media placement firm- a unique media company that was founded in 1979 and represents 95% of all LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS media in the United States and Canada.

Rivendell Media serves as the national advertising representative for over 200 gay, lesbian and HIV/AIDS newspapers, magazines and entertainment guides, their websites and standalone digital properties.

Todd has worked on almost every major LGBT media campaign, and that experience along with his knowledge of the media provide unique qualifications on what has worked, and what is necessary to reach and speak to these audiences.

Contact Info. 908-232-2021 ext. 210, or [todd@rivendellmedia.com](mailto:todd@rivendellmedia.com).



## Ask Char Q & A

**Q Dear Char, I'm feeling burnt out in my current job. How can I find a more fulfilling career path without compromising financial stability?**

*From: Burnt Out In Brainbridge*

**A Dear Burnt Out In Brainbridge,**

Feeling burnt out in your current job is common. I am not sure how long you have been in that position or what is causing it. I am asking you to examine the idea of "burnt out". Here are some questions I want you to ask yourself:

***Have you felt burned out in this position before and somehow your spark was rekindled?***

***Do you have new connections at work that have changed your feelings about your value in your job?***

***Have you been turned down for a promotion, raise, or extra responsibility?***

Your answers here may help you find what you need to make you feel excited about where you work and what you do. Looking for a new project, taking a good look at your work relationships, and talking to your boss about how you feel may turn some things around for you. Leaving your job may not need to be the answer to your feelings.



The front end of the answer to your question is that you need the job you have while you look for a new, vibrant, employment pathway. Here are some ideas for you; some things to consider:

Volunteerism is one way to explore something you always wanted to do, become visible to new people, and to gain some skills. Volunteering often leads to being noticed for innovation, commitment and caring and job offers are not unusual.

Be smart and make sure you have saved enough money; maybe even a year's salary as a safety net. Once you have that, you could even consider resigning and give yourself time to look for a new position without financial worry.

Go back to school. You can consider taking courses that will give you a step-up in a position of interest.

Get a life coach. Getting some help through job assessments, personality tests or open discussions about your current employment and life decisions may help you sort it all out and ignite you in ways that surprise you.

Consider becoming a part of Chambers of Commerce or other community meetings where networking promotes job position.

Interview others in positions you have considered and see how the field has changed. Get informed about your new interests and old dreams.

Above all of this, these are exciting times. Some people, unlike yourself, don't recognize burn out and become frustrated, quit their jobs impulsively, or even become physically or emotionally ill from the stress. You, my friend, are ahead of the game. Now take the ball, and run!

*- Dr. Charla Waxman*

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# SCHEDULE



## MONDAY



# PROJECT VIDA

ZUMBA ..... 9AM-10AM

ZUMBA ..... 5PM-6PM

SALSA ..... 6PM-7PM

## TUESDAY

SR. GOLDEN  
MOVES ..... 9AM-10AM

WEIGHT  
TRAINING ..... 5PM-6PM

## WEDNESDAY

WEIGHT ..... 9AM-10AM  
TRAINING

QI GONG ..... 5PM-6PM

XCO LATIN  
DANCE ..... 6PM-7PM

## THURSDAY

SR. GOLDEN  
MOVES ..... 9AM-10AM

YOGA ..... 6PM-7PM

HIIT ..... 7PM-8PM

## FRIDAY

ZUMBA ..... 9AM-10AM

WEIGHT  
AEROBICS ..... 5PM-6PM

SALSA ..... 6PM-7PM

## SATURDAY

ZUMBA ..... 9AM-10AM

LINE DANCING ..... 10AM-11AM

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# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## Becoming A "Resilient" Survivor

We are all built differently. What throws you off, to me, may be like a pebble in the water; there may be a ripple, but overall, there is no lasting impact. There is no right or wrong in how we handle things; no finger pointing or blaming need occur.

**Survival and how we choose to do it can be favorable or unfavorable. How we survive can have immensely positive or negative long term effects on our future emotions, thoughts and behaviors.**

No matter how you have developed as a survivor, the best news is that you can develop a survivor's outlook; one that is positive and healing. Let's begin with the idea of resilience. There are people who just seem to bounce back, regardless of what comes at them. It's that bounce-backed-ness that can seem unattainable, but it doesn't have to be.

Resilience, according to a variety of researchers (*Ann Masten, George Bonanno, Michael Ungar, among others*), all agree that those with resilience have some characteristics in common. To kind of pull them all together, let's look at these 5 qualities:

**PROBLEM SOLVING:** This means taking action or recognizing one's personal deficiencies for taking action. The best problem solvers don't solve problems on their own. They know how and who to ask for intervention-seeking.

**SOCIAL COMPETENCE:** As with number 1 in this list, you can't enlist support if you don't know how or refuse to ask for help. Social competence means that you have laid some groundwork ahead of time that has allowed

others to see a person who is empathic, can apologize as needed, provides great feedback and can take in hard to hear feedback.

Social competence means that you have behaved in a way that exudes maturity in thought and behavior, that you have been fair with others, and willing to reach out in caring and supportive ways.

**SENSE OF HUMOR:** Maintaining a view of situations with more humor and less contempt is one way to survive things. Keep in mind, this is during less traumatic situations.

**SENSE OF FUTURE:** A belief that there will be a time when the significance of an event will mean less than the benefits of the time after. Time will heal. A positive outlook on what lies ahead even if it is in the distant future can lend itself to healing.

**MENTOR:** A trusted friend, family member or co-worker that wants the best for you, will fight for you and will stay the distance as you heal can make all the difference. This person can teach you as you grapple for solid ground and can drive you toward trauma recovery. They can be trusted and make you feel that you are valued in all frames of mind and behavior.

In addition to developing resilience, practice working on your attitude in non-emergent times of your life. It will carry over as a developed habit when you need it most.

People who are positive will look for positive, and will find positive.

Purposeful pivoting is another action that true survivor's take. They don't get caught in mire and minutiae. They simply find another way. This is the same guy as the resilient problem solver. Are you seeing the connection here?

The ability to endure is important to surviving. "Keep on keepin' on"; is a valuable way to move forward. Get rough and get tough. Survivor's, just flat out, don't give up. They do the work to get through it, get around it, and get over it. They have a "Whatever it takes" attitude.

Survivor's passion is a phrase that this writer has coined, but it seems to say it all. A real survivor knows that what they do and how they do it will mean everything to their own future. They also know what it will mean to others who are watching how the best, how survivors do it. For that reason, passion rises to the surface, and forward, positive movement is inevitable.

You have survived something. You have the skills and can develop even more to get beyond what seems insurmountable. You are a survivor in the best sense of what that means.

If you become depressed or are considering ending your life, please call or text 988. Trained professionals are available 24/7/365 and ready to make sure you are ok.

- Dr. Charla Waxman



# IN CONCERT

## JORGE SUAREZ "OUT 'N' ABOUT" COLUMN

by Jorge Suarez

**The Journey of Paul Parsons – A Lifelong Groove from London to the World... There's a certain kind of respect you have for someone who's been in the dance music world since the days when you actually had to go find the music.**

No downloads, no shortcuts, just crates, conversations, and long nights behind the decks. That's the lane Paul Parsons comes from. Out of the UK, he's one of those guys who didn't just follow the scene, he lived it, built it, and stayed with it long after trends came and went.

Back in the 90s, before everything went digital, Paul was right in the middle of it, running a vinyl shop, connecting with DJs, and helping shape the sound from the ground up. And if you've ever spent time flipping through records in a real shop, you already know... that's where the magic happened.

"I had a dance music vinyl shop in the 90's just outside London..."

"I had a dance music vinyl shop in the 90's just outside London called Scoff Records with my good friend Mick Jones... we also put on regular parties and DJ'd all over, a memorable one was Berlin's Love Parade, it was immense. I was part of several labels and production teams too. I've been producing dance music since 1995."

That quote alone paints the picture. Record shop culture, underground parties, and even playing something as massive as Berlin's Love Parade, that wasn't just a moment in time,

that was a movement. It was a period when DJs weren't just playing music... they were discovering it, shaping it, and bringing people together. And that brings us to the sound Paul is deeply connected to today, NuDisco.

NuDisco isn't just a genre, it's a feeling. It started gaining traction in the late 90s and early 2000s, especially across Europe, when producers began revisiting the groove of 70s disco and funk. But instead of copying it, they reimagined it, blending those warm basslines, soulful hooks, and live-feel rhythms with modern house production. The result? Music that feels nostalgic but still fresh enough for today's dancefloor. For those of us who grew up with that 70s sound, NuDisco hits a little deeper, it's familiar, but it moves differently.

Paul Parsons fits right into that space. His music carries that balance, classic influence with a modern touch. You can hear it in the grooves... nothing forced, nothing overproduced, just solid rhythm and feel.



Over the years, he's worked across house, deep house, and NuDisco, releasing tracks and remixes that have found their way into DJ sets and radio rotations around the world.

Paul sounds like someone who still thinks about the room, the crowd, the energy, that exact moment when a track locks in and people just move. That kind of mindset doesn't come from software, it comes from experience.

From running a vinyl shop outside London, to spinning at major events, to still producing decades later... Paul Parsons represents a generation that built the scene the right way.

**Visit Out N About FB Group for additional pics and videos. Go to [boiMAG.com](http://boiMAG.com) for direct link.**

# Chicago<sup>♡</sup> Summer Festivals<sup>≡</sup> 2026<sup>♡</sup>

## May

- ♡ May 15-17 — Lincoln Park Mayfest
- ♡ May 22-24 — Belmont-Sheffield Music Fest
- ♡ May 23-24 — Sueños Festival

## June

- ♡ June 4-7 — Chicago Blues Festival
- ♡ June 12-14 — Taste of Randolph
- ♡ June 13-14 — Old Town Art Fair
- ♡ June 19-21 — Do Division Street Fest
- ♡ June 28 — Family Pride Fest
- ♡ June 20-21 — Puerto Rican Festival

## July

- ♡ July 8-12 — Taste of Chicago
- ♡ July 8-12 — Windy City Smokeout
- ♡ July 11-12 — Southport Art Fest
- ♡ July 17-19 — Wicker Park Fest
- ♡ July 18 — Silver Room Block Party
- ♡ July (late, TBD) — Chinatown Summer Fair

## August

- ♡ July 30 — Aug 2 — Lollapalooza
- ♡ Aug 7-9 — Festa Italiana
- ♡ Aug 15-16 — Chicago Air & Water Show

## September

- ♡ Sept 4-7 — Chicago Jazz Festival
- ♡ Sept 18-20 — Riot Fest
- ♡ Sept 18-20 — Retro on Roscoe

## Ongoing (Summer-long)

- ♡ May-Sept — Navy Pier Fireworks
- ♡ June 10 — Aug 15 — Grant Park Music Festival

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## DANCE RADIO

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# COMMENTARY UNCENSORED

by: Screamin' Rachael  
*Recording Artist, Entrepreneur, Publisher, Music Mogul, House Music Icon,  
sometimes Controversial, with a dash of Opinionism for good measure.*

The opinions offered in this column are "uncensored" and are intended for "open dialog" and "entertainment purposes" only. Use of this column not intended to replace or be a substitute for any professional, financial, legal, advice or any other professional service. The opinions or views expressed in this column are those of the columnist, and not necessarily those of anyone else.

## LA MERE VIPERE REUNION... HISTORY STILL BREATHING! Walking into the 49th anniversary La Mere Vipere reunion felt like stepping straight back into Chicago's underground subconscious.

**The second I walked in, decades came rushing back at once. Faces I had not seen in years suddenly emerged through the crowd like ghosts from another lifetime!**

Immediately I was transported back to that explosive era singing with my band Screamin' Rachael and Remote at Space Place, the nonprofit club and rehearsal space I created alongside Mike and Rich Harrington.

I was greeted by **Maxwell Bonehead**, who told me he had been organizing the reunion since 2007 after becoming inspired by the idea of celebrating thirty years of punk. Maxwell had spent many nights inside the original short-lived **La Mere Vipere**, the legendary late 70s club that began life as a gay bar before burning to the ground in April of '78.

I attended the reunion with my longtime friend **Adam Rebellious**, who



goes all the way back to the **Space Place** days. Adam is a true original. A solo punk artist who writes and performs his own music throughout the city, he is also one of the most knowledgeable people I know when it comes to Chicago underground music history. Frankly, he would make a

brilliant music journalist or historian if he ever decided to do it professionally. We have an ongoing argument because Adam refuses to get a cell phone. He insists he will only get one when I finally get a driver's license. Trust me, neither one of those things seems likely anytime soon.

For the last several years, the reunion has been held at **The Beetle** in Chicago's **Ukrainian Village**, and honestly, I cannot imagine a more perfect place for this gathering of underground survivors. The Beetle has the feeling of a real Chicago neighborhood bar in the same spirit legendary places like **O'Banion's** once had. Comfortable. Unpretentious. Relaxed. Full of character instead of attitude.

>>> **MORE Uncensored** >>>



# UNCENSORED

>>> *Continued* >>>

It is the kind of place where people actually talk to each other instead of staring into phones or trying to perform importance for social media. There is warmth there. History there. The kind of room where stories start flowing naturally the second the needle hits vinyl.

I met **Jessica**, part of the management team, who proudly told me the bar is woman-owned, something that honestly felt fitting considering how many strong women helped shape Chicago's underground culture despite history often overlooking them.

Part of what made everybody feel so comfortable that night was the energy of the place itself. **The Beetle** does not feel corporate, curated, or manufactured. It feels human. Inclusive. Real. People settled into conversations instead of trying to impress each other.

I met **Jean**, one of the DJs, who immediately recognized me from my band days. One of the things I respected most about her and the other DJs that night was that they played only vinyl. No laptops. No playlists. No algorithmic wallpaper pretending to be culture. Jean told me she grew up in a strict household and found freedom through **La Mere Vipere** and the entire underground scene that grew around it. She is also in **Actors' Equity**, sings in a choir, and DJs. In true Chicago underground fashion, nobody fit neatly into one category.

And people were not just listening to the music. They were physically living inside it. Bodies bounced in pogo rhythms. People twisted, spun, collided, lurched, laughed. Arms flew through the air like transmissions from another dimension. Nobody cared about choreography. Nobody cared about looking cool. It was about release. Pure release. Watching people move like that again decades later felt almost spiritual, like Chicago's underground heartbeat had suddenly started pumping through the room all over again.

That mattered because this reunion was never really about nostalgia. It was about reconnecting with people who survived and helped build Chicago's underground creative culture together.

Some of the people organizing the reunion were DJs themselves, which made the music absolutely phenomenal all night long. Music from vinyl records blasted through the room like sacred scripture for outsiders. **David Bowie. Iggy Pop. Ramones. Blondie. The Dead Boys.** And cuts from Chicago's own **Skafish**, one of the city's true punk visionaries.

One moment that hit me emotionally was hearing "Disgracing the Family Name" by **Skafish** explode through the speakers. That song instantly brought back the raw fearless energy of that era. Chicago punk was never about perfection. It was about individuality, experimentation, humor, rebellion, survival, and having the guts to be strange before the world learned how to monetize being different.



**JOEY METLER**  
MCL2026 ★

**Touche**

CHICAGO'S LEATHER BAR SINCE 1977

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**BEAR CORRUPTION**  
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11PM PIZZA PANIC

**FRI 5.22 9PM**  
RAY DALTON'S  
**FOREPLAY PARTY**  
WITH COOPER RAY + ROB MONTANA

**SAT 5.23**  
**IMSL SOCIAL** 7-10PM  
**SUBMIT** 10PM  
TO YOUR DARKEST DESIRES  
WITH MATT COVEN + AARON EVANS  
MIDNITE KINK/FANTASY BONDAGE SHOW

**SUN 5.24**  
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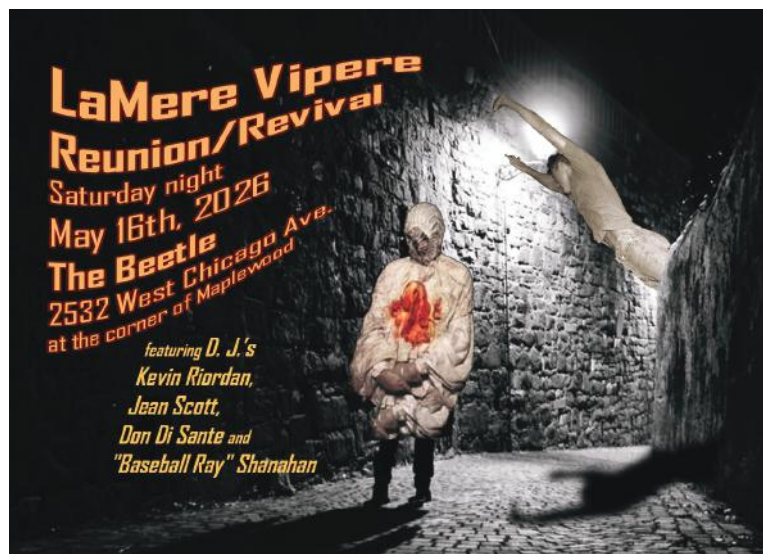
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What younger generations may not fully understand is that this was an entirely different social world. IDs were barely scrutinized. Teenagers, art students, musicians, queer kids, outsiders, punks, rebels, and kids searching for identity all collided together through music and underground clubs. They came from every race, background, sexuality, and religion imaginable, united mostly by one thing: the feeling that mainstream society had absolutely no place for them.

And at the reunion, person after person talked about how deeply this music changed their lives. Not casually. Not nostalgically. In a real survival sense. People spoke about finding acceptance for the first time. Creativity for the first time. Community for the first time. For many of us, these scenes became our families long before anybody used phrases like “safe spaces.” Back then nobody cared about being polished. That was the entire point.

**La Mere Vipere** came from a moment when people created because they had something to say, and no interest whatsoever in asking permission. The music was rough around the edges. The fashion was fearless. The clubs were packed with artists, musicians, outsiders, and visionaries trying to build something entirely new inside a city that itself felt gritty, unpredictable, and electric.

And honestly, that DIY spirit became the blueprint for everything that came afterward. As I spoke with people throughout the night, many remembered me from the Space Place era. That touched me deeply because Space Place became one of those rare Chicago crossroads where underground scenes naturally started merging together. Punk. Experimental art. Industrial sounds.



Performance art. Electronic music. Everything started colliding in the same rooms.

I had a fascinating conversation with **Vincent Marnell** about how, as an underage teenager, he moved through Chicago’s entire underground circuit beginning with **La Mere Vipere**, then **O’Banion’s**, **Oz**, **Exit**, **COD’s**, **Space Place**, **Medusa’s**, and eventually **The Warehouse**.

Those clubs were not isolated scenes. They were connected arteries feeding one giant underground organism. Looking back now, I realize these scenes were never truly separate at all. The punk crowd evolved into industrial. The industrial scene evolved into electronic experimentation. And eventually all of that energy morphed into house music. It was one continuous creative evolution happening inside Chicago.

>>> **MORE Uncensored** >>>  
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# UNCENSORED

>>> *Continued* >>>

That is why I have always felt punk and early house music were actually very similar in spirit. People love separating them historically, but for those of us who lived through it, they shared the exact same DNA. Both were rebellious. Both were DIY. Both were underground. And both were built by outsiders creating culture for themselves because nobody else would.

Looking back now at the Disco Demolition era, I also think history sometimes oversimplifies what people were actually feeling at the time. Yes, there were very real racial and cultural tensions surrounding disco, and that absolutely became part of the larger story. But many punk kids and underground artists also simply felt suffocated because disco dominated nearly every club in Chicago.



If you were not disco, there often was nowhere for you to go. Like my brother always said, sometimes you just wanted a place to drink a beer and hear a real live band. So we built our own clubs. Our own scenes. Our own culture.

Punk exploded partly because young people wanted another identity outside the polished disco mainstream that seemed to control everything at the time. Ironically, while punk was rebelling against disco culture, house music was quietly being born at the exact same moment.

House music deconstructed disco and stripped it down to its bare bones. It was also largely created by the first generation of kids making music with machines, computers, drum machines, and synthesizers like the Roland TB-303 that later created the acid sound. That is part of what makes Chicago so fascinating.

At the exact same time, Wax Trax! Records was exploding while artists like **Al Jourgensen** from **Ministry** pushed music into darker, more machine-driven territory. Chicago itself became part of the sound. The factories. The steel. The grit. The tension. The city's industrial heartbeat somehow seeped directly into the music itself.



Then one night everything shifted for me personally when I discovered **The Warehouse** right around the corner from Space Place. Walking into that room and hearing what **Frankie Knuckles** was doing completely changed my understanding of where music could go. I instantly recognized the connection between the raw underground energy of punk and the hypnotic sweat-soaked vibration of the dance floor.

Some of the original bands from that era are still performing today, including **The Effigies** and **Silver Abuse**, and honestly, this reunion inspired me to want to play live music again myself.



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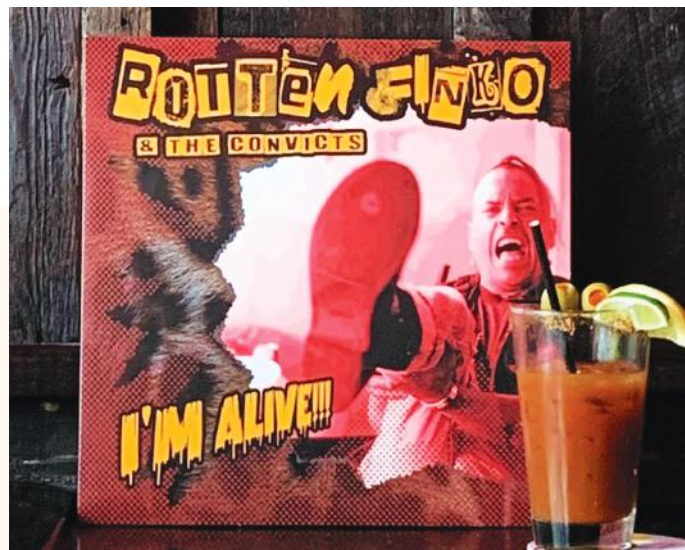


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Speaking of energy, **Rottenfinko** showed up and completely lit up the room. It took us a minute to recognize each other, but he looked fantastic, flaming red spiked hair and fully decked out in punk style to the absolute maximum.



His new record **Rottenfinko & The Convicts I'M ALIVE!!!** has just dropped, and he also has a tour planned.



In 2025, when I attended **Sundance** for the premiere of "Move Ya Body: The Birth of House" directed by **Elegance Bratton**, I was blown away hearing our record "Insult to Injury" by **Screamin' Rachael** and **Remote** featured in the film. It perfectly captured what Chicago actually felt like during that period. Punk exploding. Disco collapsing. Industrial emerging. House music being born.

All of it happening simultaneously inside one city reinventing itself through sound.

One of the most fascinating conversations of the night centered around where music is heading now in the age of AI.

**Rhonda Oakes**, who was part of that scene and visited Space Place many times, spoke passionately about teaching young people what she calls "real live music." She also dated **Vic Bondi** from **Articles of Faith**, who rehearsed and performed there.

Many people at the reunion talked about how maybe it is finally time to get back to basics again. Back to real musicians playing together in rooms. Back to raw creativity. Back to human imperfections. Back to soul.

For many of us who came from punk, industrial, and early house culture, technology was always meant to be a tool for human expression, never a replacement for humanity itself. The instruments changed. The spirit did not. Because nights like this are more than reunions. They're history still breathing.

*- Rachael Cain*



# Upcoming Festivals



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## Mumford & Son at Wrigley Field

**June 11**

Swing into a double header with the first two Wrigley concerts of the season. Check out Mumford & Sons on Friday, and [Rufus Du Sol at Wrigley](#) on Saturday, June 12. We call it the double header of music. Time to book a room at [Hawthorne Terrace!](#)

## CHICAGO BLUES FESTIVAL

**June 4 - June 7**

If you're a fan of the blues, enjoy a night of Blues with Macie Staples and some of the biggest names in the business. This is a **FREE** Festival, and with the city skyline as a view, it doesn't get much better than that!

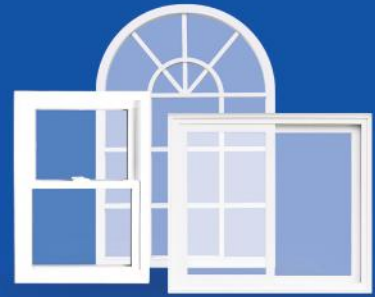


## CHICAGO RIBFEST

**June 5-7**

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