

Better Late Than Never: The Official Newsletter of The Slackers Issue #31



It's hard to believe but we are coming up to the end of the year. That went by fast!

The Slackers' basic unit of existence is the 'gig' and we were supposed to have 80 of them this year. So far, we have completed 73 and have 7 left to go. We had spring shows in the Midwest and Canada, some southwest shows ending in Punk Rock Bowling in

Vegas, Boat gigs, Europe, Brazil, Northeast interlude, 2 Skafest weekends, opening slots of the Interrupters, and the Flogging Molly cruise. We are currently around halfway through with our end of the year 'holiday' tour playing with the Voodoo Glow Skulls, Chris Murray, and Los Mal Hablados.

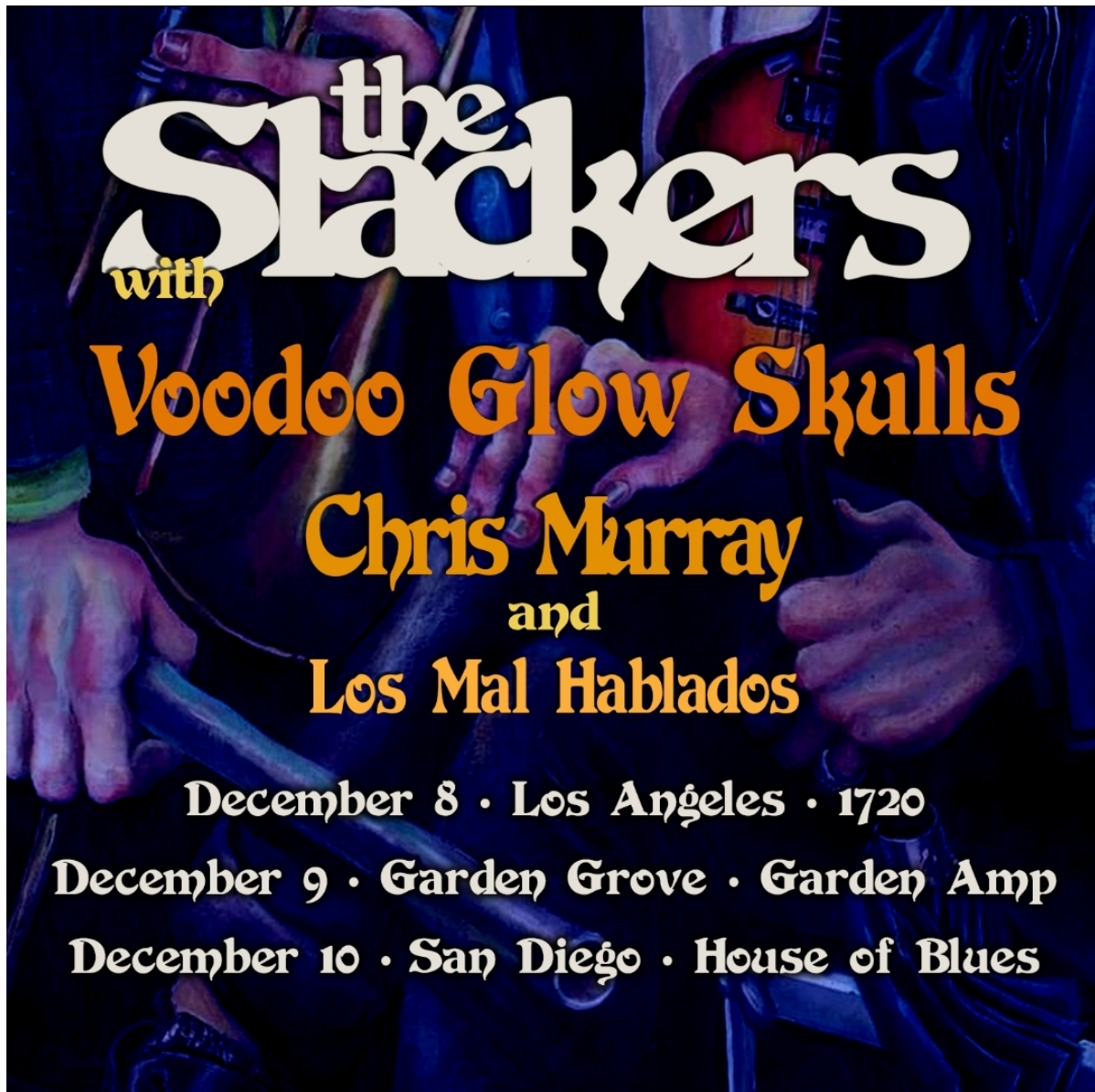
We also put out some new music in 2023 with the Kill You 45 and reissued our album from 2008, Self Medication.

It's been a great experience getting out and spending time with you all so far, lets finish out 2023 in style! Hope to see you out on the road in the next week!

Email slackermusic1991@gmail.com with any questions or ideas you may have for the newsletter. #weareslackers #youareslackers



Holiday Tour is Happening Now!



Right now we are in the middle of our annual end of the year run, the holiday tour. The west coast side has been a blast so far! And I got to say this unlikely combination has been working really well. It alternates between loud hard energy and mellow and groovy.

Doors open and Los Mal Hablados start out the night with a burst of fiery metal brass band with political lyrics. Then Chris Murray comes up with an acoustic very Ska roots oriented set. Then with Voodoo, the volume goes back up for their now classic mix of Latin punk, metal, and a little nod to ska.

From the Slackers' point of view, Vic commented, "its like we are going on after David Lee Roth so you don't want to compete with that" If anything all the louder harder bands make us play mellower and groovier. We dig harder into the dub and the ballads. We have little flashes of RocknRoll energy and some long stretches of ska and skinhead reggae. The Slackers' sets have been long on this tour, between 1.5-2 hours.

So come on down, enjoy, and pick up on what we are laying down.

Next week, we will be doing the same thing but different on the East Coast with Mustard Plug, The Freecoasters, and Stop The Presses!

the Slackers

with

Voodoo Glow Skulls	Mustard Plug
Chris Murray	The Freecoasters
Los Mal Hablados	Stop The Presses

November 29 Vancouver Rickshaw *

November 30 Seattle Crocodile ***

December 1 Portland Dantes ***

December 2 Berkeley Cornerstone ***

December 3 Santa Cruz Moe's Alley ***

December 5 Salt Lake City Metro Music Hall ***

December 6 Denver Oriental Theater ***

December 8 Los Angeles 1720 ***

December 9 Garden Grove Amphitheater ***

December 10 San Diego House of Blues ***

December 14 Washington DC Black Cat**

December 15 Bensalem Broken Goblet **

December 16 Brooklyn Brooklyn Bowl **

December 17 Boston Sinclair **

***Voodoo Glow Skulls, Chris Murray, Los Mal Hablados

**Mustard Plug, The Freecoasters, Stop The Presses

□Los Mal Hablados only

Back on the Road With Baba



Ara Babajian says....

"I'm enjoying the weird, obsessive routine I get into on tour. 2 hours before every show I put on "World In My Eyes" by Depeche Mode then start stretching my fingers, hands, legs and feet. I play along with this and other songs about five million times to get my tempos right and my hands stronger. I make the coffee, drink the coffee, change into my Rock Outfit, pack a towel, hotel key and clean shirt in my bag, put my contacts in, look in the mirror to assert my identity then walk downstairs to meet the band. For me, the show always starts 2 hours early. I don't like surprises."

Self Medication Stories



At Chicago Slackfest, we got to do a special VIP 'secret' show. Its been something we have been developing over the last 5 years, that we do 2 main public shows and then a smaller show where we focus on a theme and play at small space for around 70 people.

This year it was upstairs at the Reggies comedy room and the them was 'Self Medication Stories.' We would play 2 songs and then talk about the writing of the songs, what inspired us, and how the songs were recorded.

Vic started out talking about Don't Forget the Streets. Dave talked about Happy Song. Glen talked about Eviction. Marcus talked about Everyday is Sunday. Then Jay and Vic talked about Leave Me and Self Medication. We finished with Vic and Glen talking about Stars, our enigmatic rock ballad that proves we can play a decent rock ballad when we want to.

The highlight of the afternoon, was Vic talking about the inspiration for 'Self Medication' and how it was originally a rap song! You learn something new everyday. Check out this conversation here. I guarantee you will be chuckling to yourself and thank me for linking you to this.

https://youtu.be/nrV5iku_ZYE?si=Cs00p7phxdGVoi6j

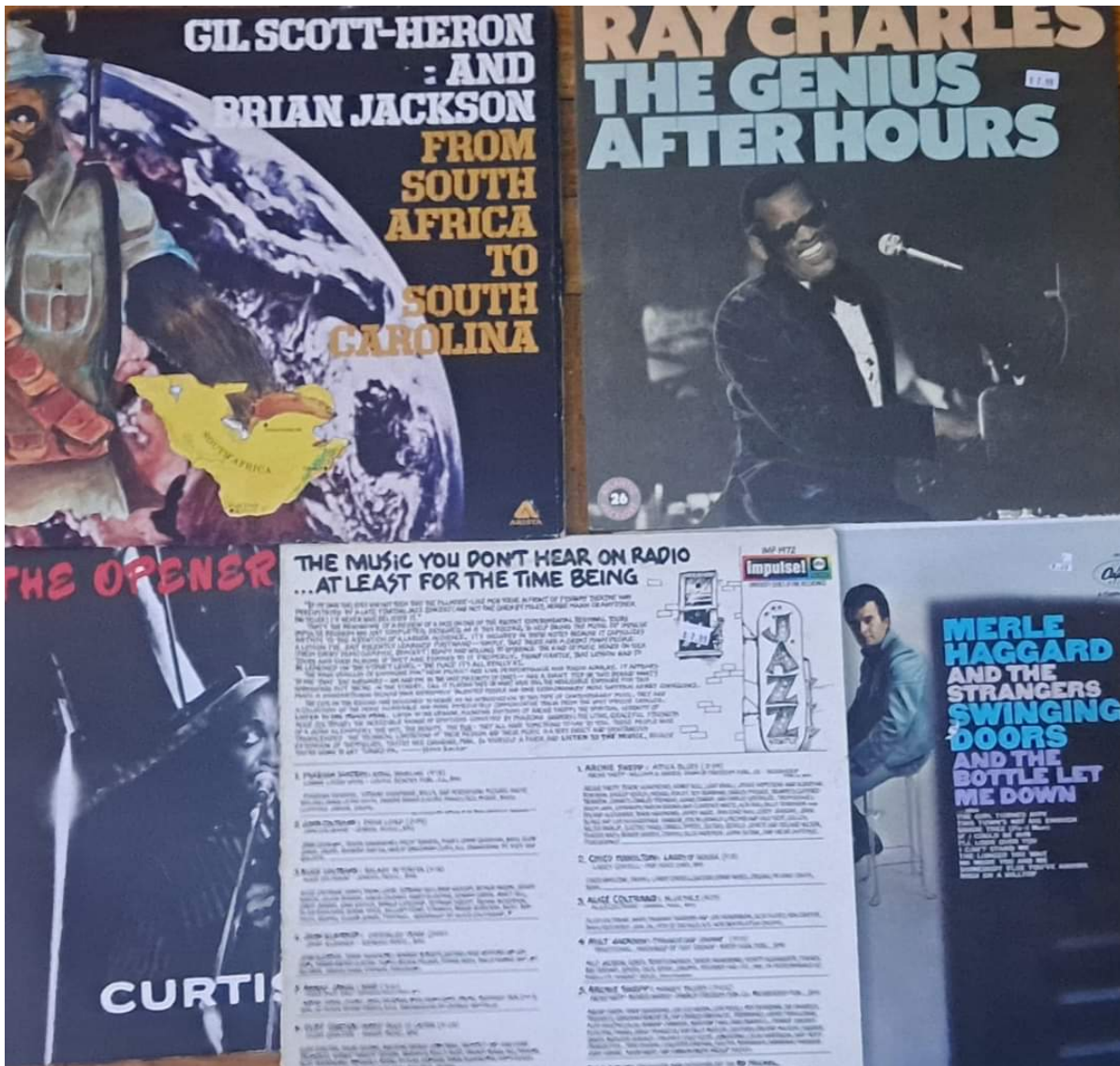
We left the show having played 8 songs and talked about them for a bit over an hour. It was an interesting reveal for us and got us thinking about what motivates us to write music in general. Hopefully, we can do this again in another city if we can work out the logistics. Any ideas? Email slackermusic1991@gmail.com



Some Last Minute Record Buys

This is Dave.

Coming back from Chicago, Jay and I ended up with a 3 hour flight delay. We were already waiting around most of the day and the delay was a really depressing development. So trying to make lemonade from lemons, we headed over to **Orbit Records** to see what they got. I dropped \$70 on some vinyl, all of which I had never fully listened to.



These are my purchases.

Merle Haggard and the Strangers / Swinging Doors and the Bottle Let Me Down

Merle Haggard has always been problematic for me. Its like he doesn't know who he wants to side with, the underdog or the ruling class. He has written some great songs and some terrible songs. This LP is all amazing songs and deals with a lot of classic country themes about heartbreak, loss, and losing in general but each song has a clever twist to it without being pretentious. It is superior songwriting, recorded well, and with mixes of country, a touch of blues and jazz, and Haggards amazing emotional yet deadpan vocal delivery.

Gil Scott-Heron and Brian Jackson / From South Africa to South Carolina

Gil Scott-Heron is another problematic figure for me. I couldn't listen to him for years because I felt he was abusive towards his bandmate, Larry McDonald and acted like a greedy addict towards the world.

Larry shook me out of the outlook a couple years back. He told me "Why do you think I would put up with all the bullshit if the music wasn't happening?"

Larry forced me to listen to Gil Scott Heron and I got to say I was impressed. It was some great music and great lyrics.

From South Africa to South Carolina is no exception. Its got the famous Johannesburg on it (whats the word?) but Beginnings and A Lovely Day might be my favorite tracks.

A special star is Brian Jackson on keys and flute. I have met Brian and played with him a little bit, very nice and low key in person. But wow on this record, he really runs the show. Impressive.

Ray Charles / The Genius After Hours

This is one of the records where Ray would record small group instrumental versions of tunes. Its very jazzy and has a jam session

'playing it for ourselves' vibe. Hank Crawford on Alto Saxophone is on fire and stands out amongst a stellar list of musicians.

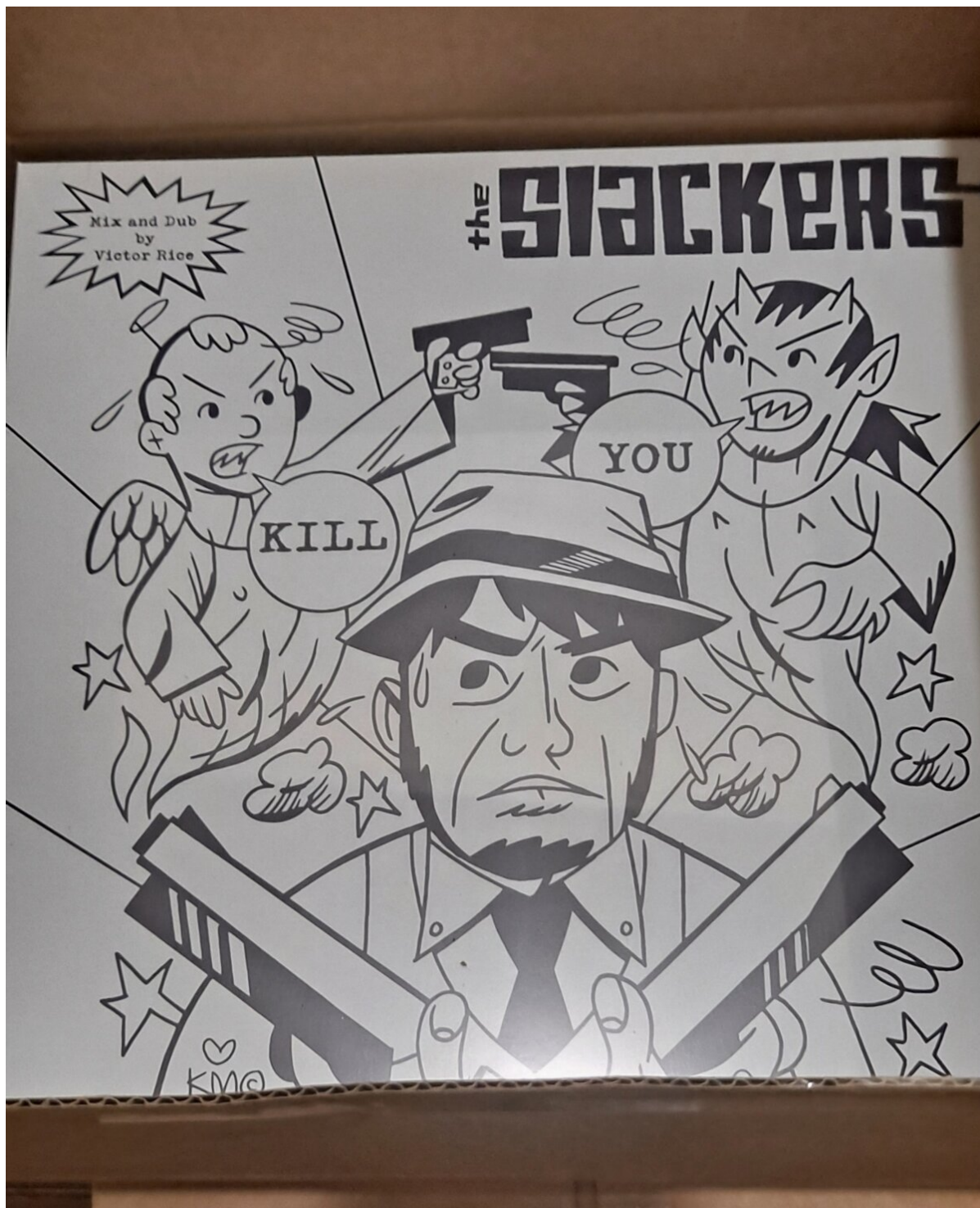
Curtis Fuller / The Opener

This album is an amazing hard bop style session with the wonderful Curtis Fuller on Trombone. His foil is Hank Mobley, a super talented tenor player. They do a couple burners but also have some ballads that showcase an exquisite trombone tone. One of the best.

Impulse Records Compilation / Irresistible Impulse

This is an impulse records comp that is a who's who of 1972 and Free Jazz starting to get funky. There is Archie Shepps' classic Attica Blues and Pharoah Saunders' Astral Traveling. The sort of album that definitely helps if you have been smoking the reefer. Or just are in a mood for something a little different.

The Latest At The Slacker Store



www.theslackers.com/store is the address of our store. Thanks for all the support we have been getting for the last month.

We got these vinyl albums in stock!

Self Medication!

Red Light

Question

Wasted Days

Live At Ernestos

Peculiar

Don't Let The Sunlight Fool Ya

plus

NY Berlin / Tell Them No 12"

Kill You / Statehouse 12"

We also got 4 different tshirt styles, Hoodies, and the Slackers custom harrington jackets!

This will be available for sale at our shows and through our mail order at

www.theslackers.com/store



Dave Hillyard's History of US Ska:
Chapter 8 Coming Soon



This chapter is gonna be coming in its full form in the next issue. Its gonna take a minute to write this out. Where we left off last chapter, Ska had crashed after 1998 through a result of music industry malfeasance and self inflicted wounds.

But in many ways, for a band like the Slackers it didn't matter whether ska was popular or not. We were so far off the mainstream that what was a weakness became a strength. We had nowhere to go but up!

Plus all the 15 years of building up Ska and Indie Music infrastructure in the United States didn't disappear overnight and this is where the Slackers' turned to keep growing post 2000. This will be the topic of Chapter 8 in 2024.

A Note From Our Agent



Ok everyone - hope youre having a great season and thanks for all the blowback on the jimmy Buffett story. I'm sorry that I'm right, but I am. What can you do.

So right now we are in the middle of our fantastic elastic December tour. This one was a ton of work but we started early - January 2023 to be exact. Putting together the right ideas in each market that will bring

out the largest amount of friendly fascinating faces while placing some art into the mix that will invigorate and challenge people. It's a chore and sometimes it doesn't even work out right. Take for example the story of our British friends BUSTER SHUFFLE. We put together a deal well in advance and dot the I's and cross the t's - even with FIVE MONTHS advance, Buster Shuffle could not make it to the dates. What a heartbreaker and what a large amount of time spent in order to create a castle made of sand.

When the government says your artist can't get in the country, there's little you can do. You're pissed and you're angry and you know that you did everything right, but you gotta get through it. And you find a great replacement artist that the crowd will absolutely love because this is about the FANS and not about anything else. So we were very lucky and CHRIS MURRAY agreed to jump in. Love this man - ask me about the Bluebeat Lounge story sometime. He's a treasure.

So the dates are doing well. I'm glad that you're going to be out there. And now we start to build 2024. For me, I just joined a beautiful British agency and I can be found at John.pantle@onefiinix.com - we're going to be doing even more work in Europe and beyond than we have in the past, as we are going to be part of a stellar roster that includes Ed Sheeran and many others. I'm honored to start the North American office and this is the night to crush it.

Please feel free to send over your ideas, your theories as to who we should take out for 2024. We're already on it!!!

TOUR DATES...TOUR DATES AND MORE TOUR DATES!



the Slackers

On Tour

with Mustard Plug The Freecoasters and Stop the Presses

December 14 Washington DC Black Cat
December 15 Bensalem, PA Broken Goblet
December 16 Brooklyn, NY Brooklyn Bowl
December 17 Cambridge, MA The Sinclair



And as per our longstanding tradition we reach the end of the newsletter and we share with you the end of 2023 and the beginnings of 2024!

Dec 8 Los Angeles 1720
Dec 9 Garden Grove – Garden Grove Ampitheater
Dec 10 San Diego House of Blues
Dec 14 Washington DC Black Cat
Dec 15 Bensalem, PA Broken Goblet
Dec 16 Brooklyn Brooklyn Bowl
Dec 17 Cambridge, MA The Sinclair

April 2024



Spring Warmup Tour

**Thursday April 4th Harrisburg Stage on Herr
Friday April 5 Pittsburgh Mr. Smalls
Saturday April 6 Cleveland Grog Shop**

**Sunday April 7 Detroit Magic Bag
Mon April 8 Buffalo Rec Room
Wed April 10 Kitchener The Hub
Thursday April 11 Toronto Velvet
Friday Apr 12 Ottawa Overflow Brewery
Saturday April 13 Quebec L'Antibar
Sunday April 14 Montreal Café Campus**

MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!



Europe 2024

**Tuesday, Sept 24 Brighton The Arch
Wednesday, Sept 25 London Underworld
Thursday, Sept 26 Glasgow Audio
Friday Sept 27 Sheffield Corporation
Saturday Sept 28 Southampton 1865
Sunday Sept 29 Bristol Exchange
Monday Sept 30 Swansea Sin City**

Sunday October 13 Berlin SO36 END OF TOUR PARTY!

MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

Many more shows to be booked for 2024!

**Please email us at John.pantle@onefiinix.com if you want to book
a show!**

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