

Bar Bands

The bar bands work the essence of the thing, no lights, no effects, just the soundtrack for your standard Tuesday night, the bricks and mortar that build the bridge through the week and a day beyond if you're the slightest bit lucky.

The bar band is your brother-in-law's break from his shitty job, his aging home and the indignity of having to answer for both. It's the kid at the corner figuring his way through a chord at a time, a beer-soaked mentorship in the ways of the broken string and the empty house, the singular applause of the soundman as he checks his watch and starts to shut the place down, the buckle and snap of cases and knobs echoing through the barren club.

At A Punk Rock Show With A 12-Year-Old Boy

His first.
His first time experiencing the way the kick drum rattles your sternum and the bass guitar – his instrument of choice – when mixed just right will rearrange your insides.
His first time to scream himself hoarse.
His first time to shake his body loose.
His first time to see me do the same.
His first time to know the singular aroma of spilled beer and sweat.
And when the slamdancers got a little

too enthusiastic, it was the first time in a long time that he turned to me for cover, sliding to my side as smoothly as he possibly could, taking note, I'm sure, of my upraised hands and protective stance.

Author Bio

Eric Evans is a writer and musician from Buffalo, New York with stops in Portland, Oregon and Rochester, New York where he currently resides with his wife, Diane, and son, Henry. His work has appeared in *Artvoice*, *Blind Man's Rainbow*, *Posey*, *Lucid Moon*, *Poetry Motel*, *Hazmat*, *Remark* and many other publications as well as a few anthologies. He has published six collections. He has also published a broadside through Lucid Moon Press.

cover art:

flickr.com/photos/lavatica

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Ink Publications
50 Bond Street
Rochester, New York 14620
www.inkpublications.com

Lisbon via Boston

by
Eric Evans

An Ink Publications Broadside



Jazz Phase

It's just a phase I told my wife
when it all began – I'll get
what I need and then move on.

Little did I know that every
Eric Dolphy note would imprint
itself on my DNA, that Cecil
Taylor would work my ribs
until I'm breathless. It never
occurred to me that Coltrane
would occupy a place on the
wall held in other homes
for Buddah or a pope. All that
time ago, when my friend got
me started, I just never understood
that one day improvisation would
turn into something analogous to
breathing, that my heart would
beat to its own free-form time.

Sun Kil Moon's "Tiny Cities" At 10:30 On A Saturday Night

They're not his songs
but they may as well be
so finely does he work
their corners and bend
their notes, staking
his claim with authority,
a conquering hero with
a mission in mind,
knowing full well that
possession is the greater
part of any law.

For The Sake Of The Dignified

"You ask me am I crazy for
playing the cello, why do you
not ask if they are not crazy
for shelling Sarajevo?"
- Vedran Smailovic

How do you serenade a mortar shell,
accompany a hail of rifle-fire, find
the notes to accompany the shudder
of destruction? Do the bullets fall
intermittently or do the snipers
consent to keep something akin
to a measured beat, the constrictions
of time bound to the dictates of
an anonymous trigger finger?

Music as it's own form of weaponry
is a beautiful thing, a wounded solo
atop the library rubble, a primal
scream in formal wear, twenty-two
days in a single spot and then a
graveyard tour for the sake of the
dignified, the measures and bars
giving rise to the voices kept to
a whisper, the pauses and rests
like the collectively held breath
of the irreducibly damned.

Lisbon via Boston

I could have easily followed her
back to Massachusetts, would've
carried her Telecaster case and
worn a Red Sox cap if necessary,
anything for a woman with a wrist
tattoo of a broken record and the
song that goes with it, the grooves
worn down by a thousand upward
strums

while some writer makes
note of her Portuguese descent, a
country I've always wanted to see,
Lisbon via Boston, an indirect
route to a Mediterranean world,
her chocolate brown eyes the stuff
of postcards and lies, half-truths
about my ever wanting to return,
content to reside in the guitar
string nest of her wandering
charms.