Jason Farrell collection

Special Collections in Performing Arts
University of Maryland Libraries

Processed by: John Davis
Date Processed: April 2016
Size: 2.50 linear feet
Inclusive Dates: 1985-2017
Collection No.: 2016-104-FARRELL-SCPA
SCPA shelf location: L9-3-2, Map cases
Abstract

Jason Farrell (b. December 24, 1969) is a musician, graphic designer, and filmmaker who currently lives in Los Angeles, California, but also spent several decades as a part of the punk music subculture in the Washington, D.C. area. The Jason Farrell collection contains items that span the years 1985 to 2017; the bulk of the materials date from 1987 to 1998 when Farrell was a member of the bands Swiz and, later, Bluetip. The materials in this collection primarily consist of show fliers and posters that Farrell designed for his bands.

Important Information for Users of the Collection

How to Use This Collection: Please contact the curator at vnovara@umd.edu to arrange access to the materials.

Restrictions: There are no restricted files in this collection.

Preferred Citation: Jason Farrell collection, Special Collections in Performing Arts, University of Maryland Libraries.

Publication Rights: All intellectual property remains with Jason Farrell and, as such, the materials in this collection can only be used within the restrictions of U.S. Copyright Law.

Status: This collection is PROCESSED

Historical Note

Jason Farrell (b. December 24, 1969) is a musician, graphic designer, and filmmaker who currently lives in Los Angeles, California, but also spent several decades as a part of the punk music subculture in the Washington, D.C. area. Born in Washington, D.C. and raised in the suburb of Bethesda, Maryland, Farrell joined the local punk and skateboarding subcultures as a teenager. Following a brief stint in the mid-1980s as a guitarist/bassist for the band Bells Of, Farrell made his initial mark as the guitarist in Swiz, a hardcore band that existed from 1987 to 1990. Swiz was notable in the D.C. punk scene at the time for straddling a line between the melodic, yet experimental, strain of punk that had come to embody much of D.C.’s then-current punk scene and the more punishing, aggressive hardcore sound that still was prevalent in American punk.

Following the break-up of Swiz, Farrell eventually founded the band Bluetip in early 1995. The band played a brand of punk that was simultaneously tuneful and abrasive, which was consistent with other peer bands from the D.C. punk scene like Fugazi and Kerosene 454. Bluetip saw Farrell stepping forward to sing lead, in addition to his guitar duties, for the first time. Following three albums on Washington, D.C.’s Dischord Records, as well as hundreds of performances around the world, Bluetip disbanded in January 2002.

Newly settled in New York City, Farrell then founded the band, Retisonic. Expanding on Bluetip’s sound, Retisonic released a handful of EPs and an LP during the band’s brief time together in the mid-2000s. Although the members of Swiz had already reunited once before in
the short-lived mid-1990s band Sweetbelly Freakdown, another partial reunion arose in the late 2000s with the formation of Farrell’s latest band, Red Hare. Red Hare brought Farrell back together with three of his longtime collaborators -- singer Shawn Brown (Swiz, Sweetbelly Freakdown, Dag Nasty), bassist Dave Eight (Swiz, Sweetbelly Freakdown, Bluetip) and drummer Joe Gorelick (Bluetip, Retisonic). Red Hare continues to both record and perform and stands as Farrell’s latest contribution to the punk culture that sprung up from the Washington, D.C. area and has thrived for more than four decades.

Farrell, who graduated from the University of Maryland in 1992 with a Bachelor of Arts in advertising design, has also provided graphic design and art direction for nearly two hundred releases from punk labels such as Dischord and Jade Tree Records, along with design work for his own musical projects. He has also written and directed several short films and commercials, as well as music videos for artists like Flag, Bonnie Raitt, and Ted Leo.

Scope and Contents of Collection
The Jason Farrell collection covers the period from 1985 to 2007; the bulk of the materials date from 1987 to 1998. The collection consists of posters, fliers, and ephemera related to Farrell's work as a musician, including his work with bands such as Swiz, Bluetip, and Retisonic.

Custodial History and Acquisition Information
Purchase from Farrell and subsequent gift of Vincent J. Novara, curator of Special Collections in Performing Arts, received in March 2016.

Arrangement of Collection
This collection is organized into six series.

- Series I: Swiz
- Series II: Fury
- Series III: Bluetip
- Series IV: Retisonic
- Series V: Other projects
- Series VI: Oral History

Series Descriptions

**Series 1: Swiz, 1987-1989, undated (12 items)**
This series contains posters and fliers that Farrell designed and illustrated for his band, Swiz. Materials are arranged chronologically.

  **Subseries 1.1: Fliers, 1987-1989, (8 items)**
  This subseries contains fliers designed by Farrell to promote concerts by his band, Swiz.

  **Subseries 1.2: Posters, Undated–1989, (4 items)**
  This subseries contains posters designed by Farrell to promote concerts by his band, Swiz.

**Series 2: Fury, 1989 (1 item)**
This series contains a flier that Farrell designed and illustrated to promote a concert by his band, Fury. Materials are arranged chronologically.

**Subseries 2.1: Fliers, 1989, (1 item)**
This subseries contains a flier designed by Farrell to promote a concert by his band, Fury.

**Series 3: Bluetip, 1995-2001 (9 items)**
This series contains posters and fliers that Farrell designed and illustrated for his band, Bluetip. Materials are arranged chronologically.

**Subseries 3.1: Fliers, 1995-1998, (5 items)**
This subseries contains fliers designed by Farrell to promote concerts by his band, Bluetip.

This subseries contains posters designed by Farrell to promote concerts and recordings by his band, Bluetip.

**Series 4: Retisonic, 2007, undated (3 items)**
This series contains posters and ephemera that Farrell designed and illustrated for his band, Retisonic. Materials are arranged chronologically.

**Subseries 4.1: Posters, 2007, (2 items)**
This subseries contains posters designed by Farrell to promote concerts by his band, Retisonic.

**Subseries 4.2: Ephemera, undated, (1 item)**
This subseries contains ephemera designed by Farrell to promote his band, Retisonic.

**Series 5: Other Projects, 1985-1996 (2 items)**
This series contains other creative efforts from Farrell. Materials are arranged chronologically.

**Subseries 5.1: Posters, 1985-1993, (1 item)**
This subseries contains posters designed by Farrell for bands he was not a member of.

**Subseries 5.2: Recordings, 1996 (1 item)**
This subseries contains recordings related to Farrell’s work as a filmmaker and musician.

**Series 6: Oral History, 2017 (1 item)**
This series contains an interview with Jason Farrell regarding his music and artwork.

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**Box Inventory**

**Series 1 – Swiz, 1987-1989 (12 items)**

**Subseries 1 – Fliers, 1987-1989**

**Box 1**

Folder 1  

Folder 2  

Folder 3  

Folder 4  

Folder 5  
Folder 8  July/August 1989 – United States/Canada tour

**Subseries 2 – Posters, 1987-1990**
Box 1
Folder 9  September 26, 1987 – Washington, D.C. – St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church – w/ Fugazi, Darkness at Noon
Folder 12  August 3, 1990 – Norwalk, CT. – The Anthrax – w/ Supertouch, American Standard (2 copies)

**Series 2 – Fury, 1989 (1 item)**
**Subseries 1 – Fliers, 1989**
Box 1

**Series 3 – Bluetip, 1995-2001 (9 items)**
**Subseries 1 – Fliers, 1995-1998**
Box 1
Folder 14  October 25, 1995 – Washington, D.C. – Black Cat – w/ Flagships, B-Bender
Folder 15  December 23, circa 1995 – Washington, D.C. – Black Cat – w/ Kepone and Kerosene 454
Folder 16  February 3, 1996 – Washington, D.C. – Black Cat – w/ The Warmers and The Delta ’72
Folder 17  April 25, 1996 – Washington, D.C. – Black Cat – w/ Trans Am and Sideshow

**Subseries 2 – Posters, 1995-1998**
Box 1
Folder 19  October 25, 1995 – Washington, D.C. – Black Cat – w/ Flagships, B-Bender
Folder 20  United States tour, Fall 1996
Folder 21  European tour, 2001
Folder 22  Groningen, Netherlands – Vera - May 13, 2001 (artist unknown)

**Series 4 – Retisonic, 2007, undated (3 items)**
**Subseries 1 – Posters, 2007**
Box 1
Folder 23 Levittown EP promotional poster, 2007
Folder 24 European Tour 2007

Subseries 2 – Ephemera, undated
Box 1
Folder 25 Stickers, undated

Series 5 – Other Projects, 1985-1993, undated (2 items)
Subseries 1 – Posters, 1985-1993
Box 1
Folder 26 Lungfish – Rainbows From Atoms promotional poster, 1993

Subseries 2 – Recordings, 1996
Box 1
Folder 29 “North Rt. 1” short film, VHS tape, 1996

Series 6 – Oral History, 2017 (1 item)
Item 1 Jason Farrell interviewed by John Davis, audio recording, June 2017 (Transcript)

Related Material
- Bluetip, Dischord No. 101, compact disc: https://umaryland.on.worldcat.org/oclc/39974064?databaseList=638
- Sharon Cheslow Punk Flyers Collection, 1979-1991, Special Collections in Performing Arts, University of Maryland Libraries
- John Davis collection on punk, Special Collections in Performing Arts, University of Maryland Libraries.
- D.C. Punk and Indie Fanzine Collection, Special Collections in Performing Arts, University of Maryland Libraries. (finding aid)

Subjects
- Bluetip (Musical group)
- Dischord Records
- Fugazi (Musical group)
- Government Issue (Musical group)
- Graphic artists—United States.
- Hardcore (Music)--United States.
- Hardcore musicians
- MacKaye, Ian
- Nation of Ulysses (Musical group)
- Punk culture--United States.
- Punk rock music.
- Punk rock music--Washington (D.C.)--History and criticism.
- Punk rock musicians.
- Punk rock musicians Washington (D.C.)
- Punk rock music in art
- Punk rock music Washington (D.C.) History and criticism.
- Swiz (Musical group)
- Washington (D.C.)