

ENTERTAINMENT

# Piano's on fire, pants are off

**Punk rockers Spaceshits have problems with audiences, venues, furniture and, of course, their name.**

"I've been aware of the problems it might pose since the beginning."

The Fantastic Mr. Fox is referring to the name of his band, the Spaceshits.

"In some clubs, they put "sh\*\*s" to censor it," he says. "One time, a place called us 'Spaceship.' That was the worst."

It's a tragic thing when pesky propriety gets in the way of juvenility. Or it would be, if such a minor alphabetical swap actually sabotaged a minor attempt at cultural defiance. But for a band that bases a healthy chunk of its being on bad-boyism, this reaction isn't frustrating. It's expected. It's welcomed. It's favourable.

Lead guitarist Mr. Fox can't explain it or contain it, but he admits that "yes,

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it's true" – a reputation for trouble precedes his band. That's trouble with a capital T and that rhymes with P and that

stands for punk. Mixed with garage, rockabilly and rock'n'roll, of course.

"We're bad 'cause we can't help it, 'cause we gotta be, 'cause the ladies like it that way."

Whatever the reason, a proclivity for the unruly followed the Fantastic Mr. Fox and his cohorts. *Greeny City Chi*

Blacksnake and Casino, through two U.S./Canadian tours, where at every show – all, uh, 69 of them – they unwittingly found themselves in the midst of some sort of wild, riotous activity.

"It happens at every show, but there's always a different level of it," he says. "It ranges from an old guy in Eugene, Ore., heckling us for no apparent reason, to the crazy incident at the Monkeyhouse last year." (When an "unprovoked" fight broke out and threw the bar into a glass-smashing, table-turning, ceiling-plant-hanging fiesta.)

Before that, they were booted off the airwaves of CKUT's weekly rock'n'roll hoe-down, *Aack!!*, for being, well, rude. Clearly, many think antics like theirs are not fun at all. But that's impossible: Mr. Fox says they're "just having a good time."

"We're not animals!

"This stuff just happens. Like in Quebec City, all these teenage boys and girls came to the stage and started pulling our pants off. Of course, that was after we set the piano on fire ..."

You could argue that noisy garage rock like theirs, high on testosterone, naturally lends it self to mischief. You could also argue that a having a naughty little buzz is a convenient way for a band to propel itself into infamy – locally at least. For whatever reason – be it their raunchy guitar struts or just their raunch – these guys are known in this city.

"In Montreal we probably have more of an enemy base than a fan base," he says. "Then again, we do feel appreciated by the people who come to our shows. Like the guy with the dreadlock pompadour. That rasta-rockabilly is a constant source of mirth."

With more than a handful of U.S., Japanese and domestic singles to their name, a full-length out on Long Beach California's Sympathy for the Record Industry and another album on its way, it's obvious that somebody likes these guys – a lot.

Garage rock's dance with the indie-world is far from over and as long as the demand's there, this band's got the goods. "We have a lot of emotion we need to express, lot's of love," Fox says. "We may look like farmers, but we're really lovers."

✦ *Spaceshits play Le Petit Campus, 57 Prince Arthur St. E. tonight at 10. Admission is \$5.*



**Spaceshits: as long as the demand's there, they've got the goods.**