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STRASSENJUNGS: THE 'FAKE' GERMAN PUNK ROCKERS WHO TOURED WITH THE CLASH

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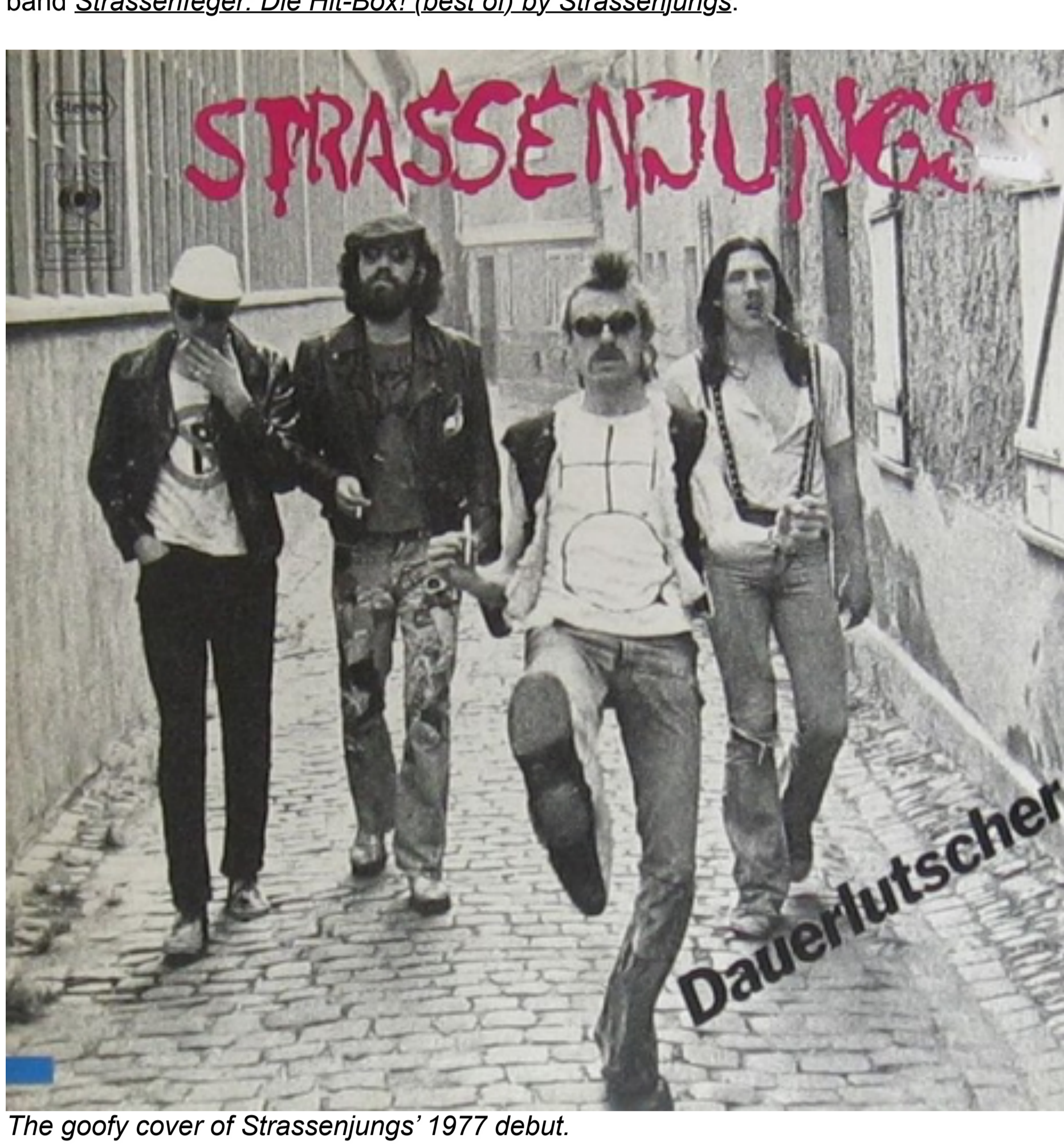
German 'punk' band Strassenjungs circa 1980.

In 1977 two German producers decided to try to follow Malcolm McLaren's success with the Sex Pistols by creating a "fake" punk rock band. The result would be a quad hailing from Frankfurt called Strassenjungs (which translates as "Street Boys").

Axel Klopprogge and Eckehard Ziedrich pulled Strassenjungs together during a time when the punk scene was still in a formative state in Germany. Their timing, as far as Strassenjungs was concerned, was pretty perfect. It should have worked. But it didn't.

Despite getting lucky enough to tour rather extensively through Europe with The Clash in late 1977 (and according to the band's official site Siouxsie & The Banshees in 1980), Strassenjungs' albums pretty much bombed as soon as they were released. Which is strange because they were seemingly laser-focused on being as "aggressive" as possible penning songs about teenage rebellion, sex, drugs and booze. While the combination of these things generally produce hit-making results, this was not the case for Strassenjungs until much later in their career. They were never truly accepted into the punk scene in Germany and in 1977 German musician Peter Hein accused the band of not being "punk" at all but "langhaarig, blödfressig, deutsch" or "long-haired, loud-mouthed Germans."

If certain folklore about Strassenjungs is to be believed after a couple of failed records in 1982 the band's debut record was added to the German Index (a censorship program) under the charge of "inciting crime and alcohol abuse" both of which seem pretty fucking punk rock to me. Sadly the dubious classification now prevented the album from being sold to minors. With all that working against them you'd think Strassenjungs might have called it quits, but they didn't. Though they've been through various lineup changes over the decades the band still performs today with original bassist Nils Setzer. I've included some singles from Strassenjungs for you to consider below as well as a couple of photos of the band pretending to be punks back the day. If you dig what you hear in this post here's a link pick up a "best" compilation from the band *Strassenjeger: Die Hit-Box! (best of) by Strassenjungs*.



The goofy cover of Strassenjungs' 1977 debut.



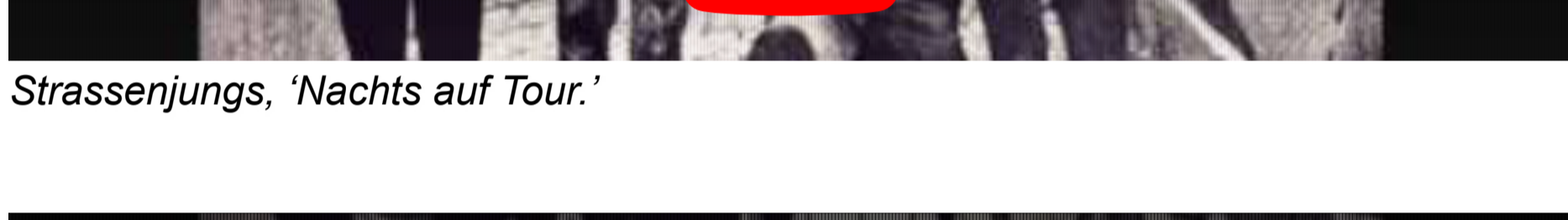
The back of Strassenjungs' 1981 album 'Los!'



Strassenjungs, 'Jet Set Flicker.'



Strassenjungs, 'Nachts auf Tour.'



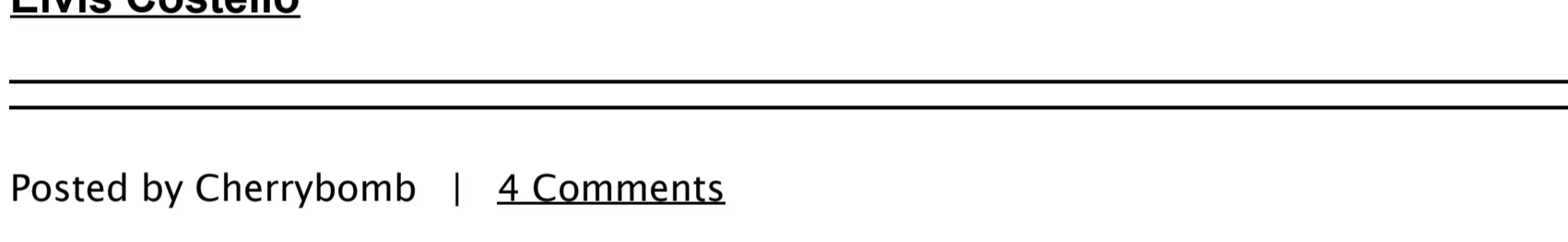
Strassenjungs, 'Hey hau ab.'



An energetic performance by Strassenjungs on German television in 1982.

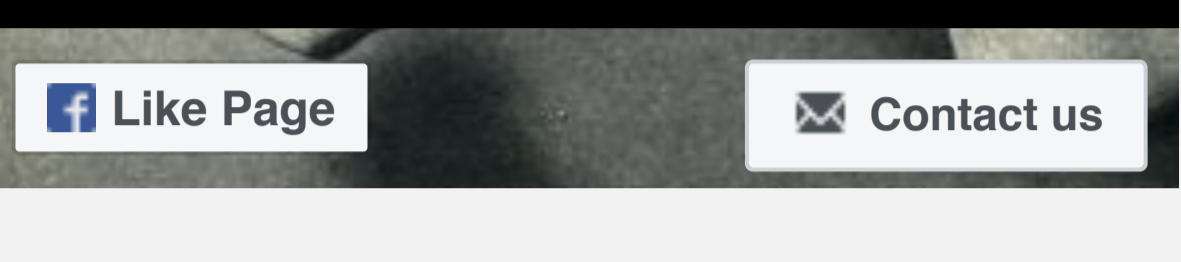
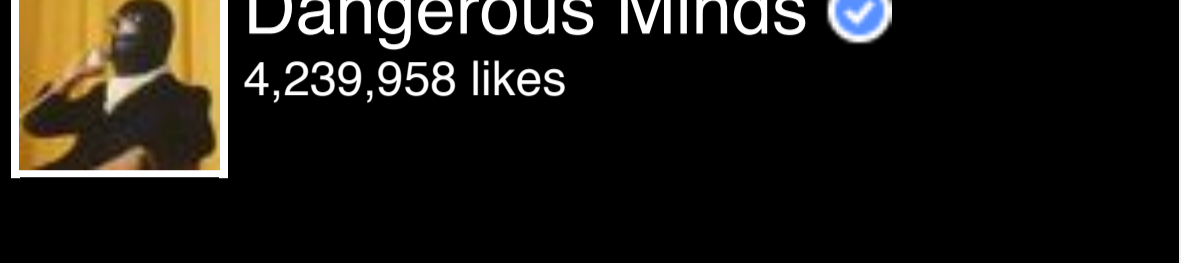
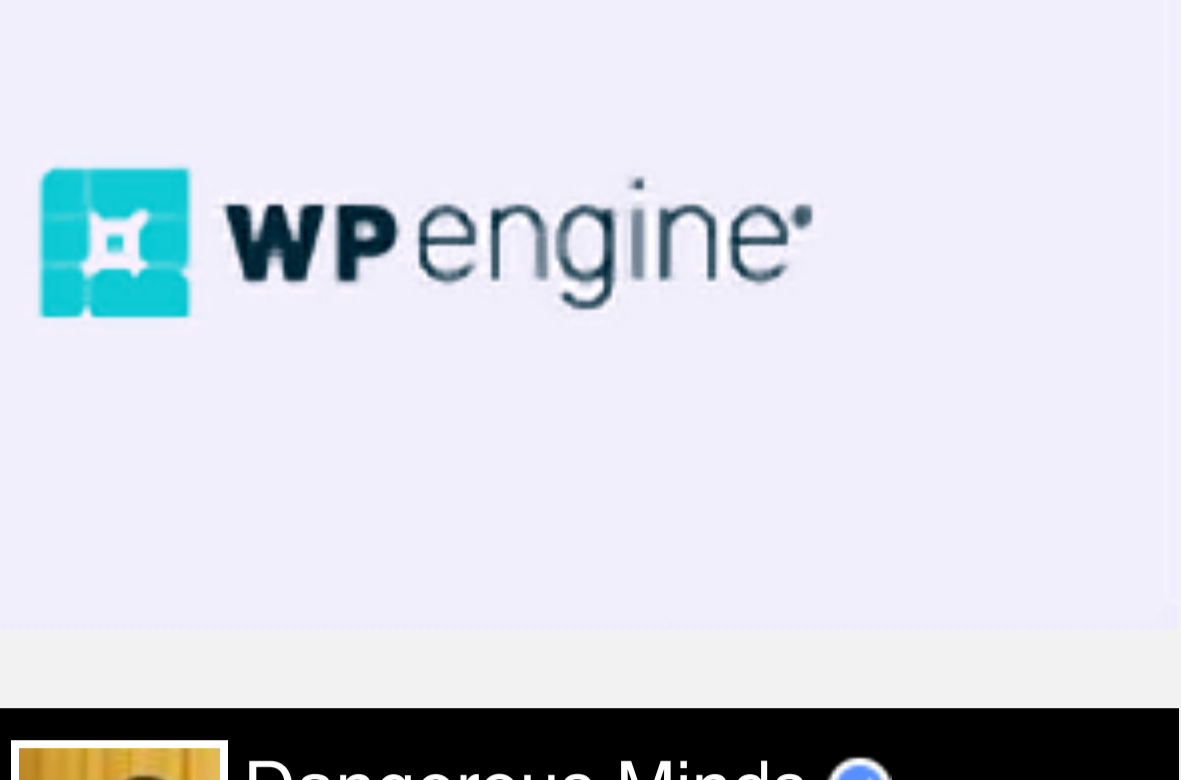
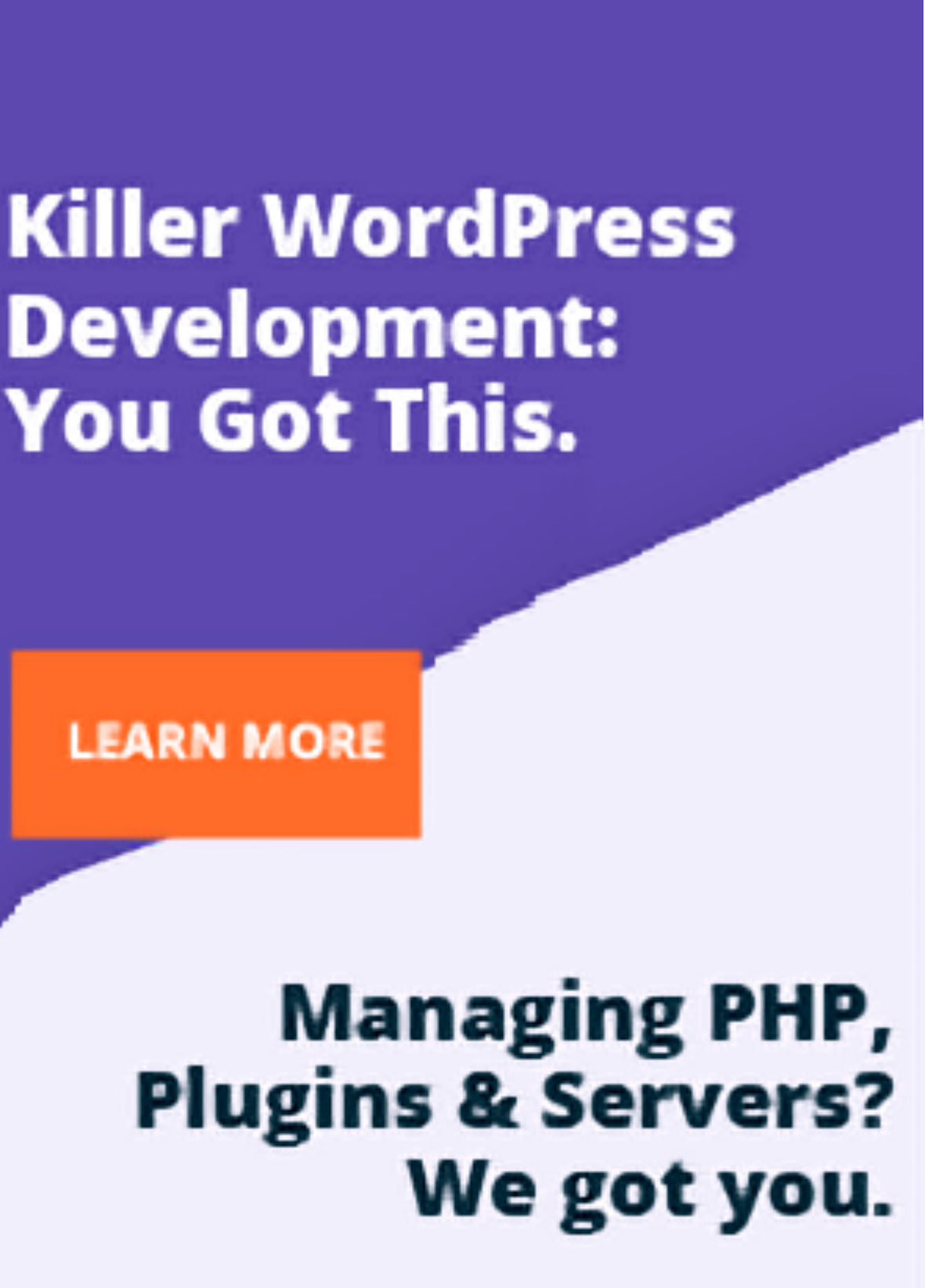
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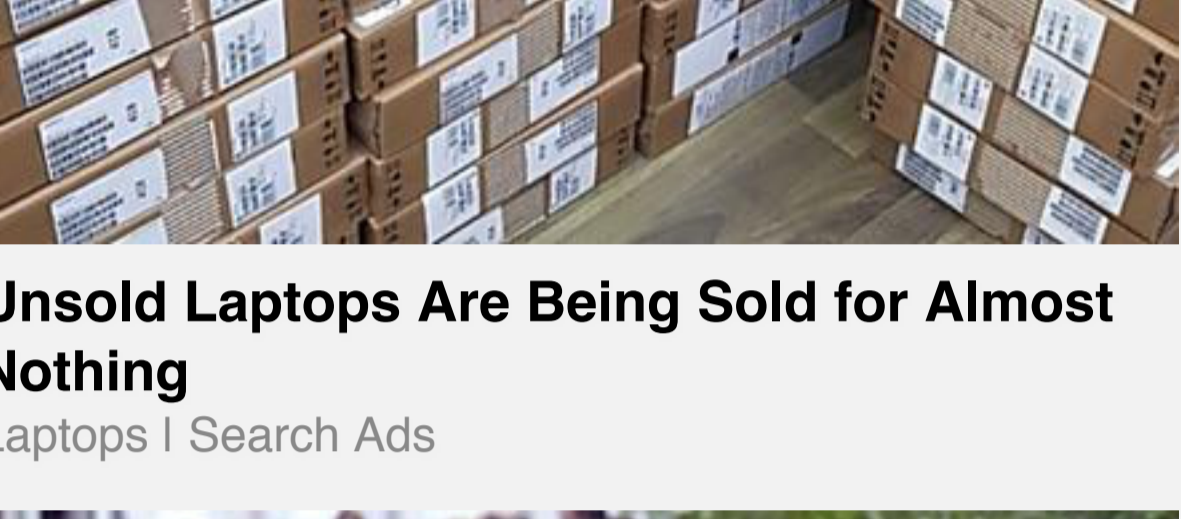
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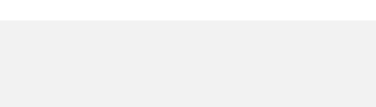


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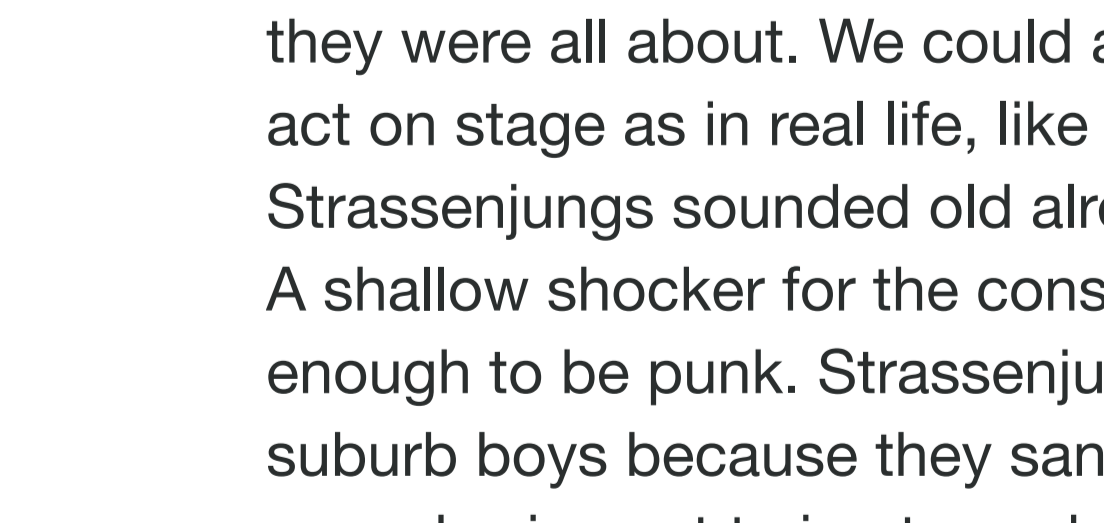
William Cocoa → Huh? · 6 years ago
You're right - 'real' punk is a contradiction. I think part of the continuing appeal of punk is that it invites debate, it is never fixed but subject to constant reinterpretation and redefinition. Long hair and moustaches might have got these fellas laughed out of the Roxy in '77, but from the perspective of our far flung future it all seems like great fun. What do a bunch of 14 year olds in safety pinned leathers know anyway? It takes guts to wear eye make up and flying goggles when you're approaching middle age. No Rules! And Joe Strummer was 26 in '77.
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mathead · 6 years ago
Having been an punk-leaning adolescent from Frankfurt from that time, I remember the Strassenjungs quite well. No punk would have been caught dead with their logo on his jacket. The Strassenjungs sounded like a couple of other bands from the anarcho alternative sector of the time, notably Schroeder Roadshow. Just compare their image on the sleeve to their stage appearance and you'll know what they were all about. We could all tell the Sex Pistols, who seemed to act on stage as in real life, like what they appeared to be. Bands like Strassenjungs sounded old already when they appeared on the scene. A shallow shocker for the conservative bourgeoisie, but not shocking enough to be punk. Strassenjungs were a hit amongst pubescent suburb boys because they sang about oral sex. For everyone else, just some boring act trying to cash in on punk novelty.
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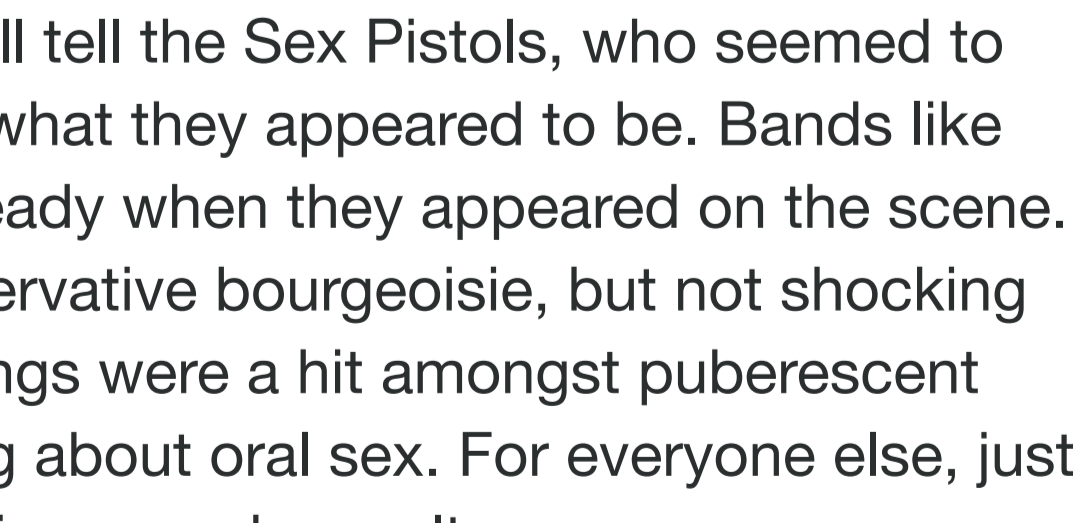
Fred · 6 years ago
Same story as Big Balls and the Great White Idiot, 'cept they had two LPs
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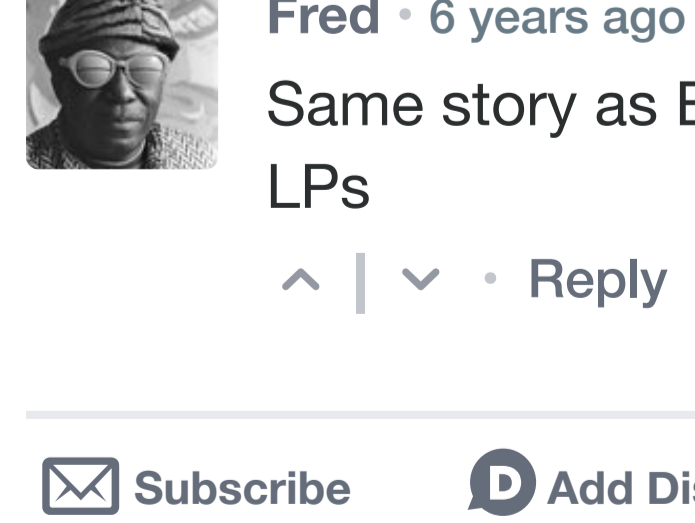
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