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AV Club From left to right: Brian, Dev, FrostisRad, Animal, VA

When you think of pop punk, many key elements make up the genre, such as the fast, angry, angsty gritty foundation that punk was founded on. Bands such as The Clash, Bad Brains, and Sex Pistols were credited as some of the originators of punk throughout the late 70s early 80s.

Later, The Descendant's *Milo Goes To College* and Green Day's *Dookie* became the standard for how a pop-punk album should sound. This sound grew and grew the name status 'til it eventually spawned the Kevin Lyman-founded festival known as "Vans Warped Tour" in 1995. As a 90s baby growing up on the west side of Detroit, I didn't get put on to these albums 'til later in my life, however, when I think of pop punk, seeing bands like Blink-182(still my favorite, *Enema Of The State* is a classic), Sum 41, Jimmy Eat World, Good Charlotte, Yellowcard, Simple Plan and a few years later Fall out Boy, Panic! At The Disco and All Time Low on MTV throughout my teen years made listening to this genre more accessible than it was in the 90s.

Over the past few years, I've had the pleasure of working with west side Detroit pop punk artist, "FrostIsRad" who takes on his blend of the pop punk genre and adds a Detroit twist. Frost started as a videographer, shooting music videos for the likes of Royce Da 5'9, Chiodos, Marv Won, Eric Bellinger, and D12, and also working with companies like VH1 and MTV. Eventually, Frost made his transition into being an artist himself. Starting originally as a rapper, Frost eventually fell into the pop punk scene. Frost along with band mates The AV Club, which consists of VA(keys and Bass), Animal(Guitar), Brian(Guitar), and Devin(Drums), has been gaining traction on a local and national level, growing their sound into a genre that they call "Detroit Emo". Opening for Punk act TX2 at the end of 2023 at The Loving Touch in Ferndale was the start of projecting FrostIsRad into the national circuit. Below is my interview with FrostIsRad and the Band before their set for My Detroit Player's show on June 19th, 2024.

E-Man: So, How did this show get offered to you?

Frost: Last year, Emily hit me up. She's the bass player in the band and she invited me to a jam session. Me, VA, and Alex pulled up and we were just chillin', having a good time, it was a similar setup. They had aerial dancers and stuff but it was just a jam session, so a year later, I think they were just testing it out and she asked, "yo, do you wanna play with us?" I've always wanted to do a show with them, like, they're a really good band, they're dope.

E-Man: Perfect segue. Break down My Detroit Players to me, because I wasn't hip until you sent me the invite to this. Who does it consist of? What is it about? What can we expect?

Frost: They're like, well, the Maestro is in the band, you got my homie Jr...They're like, they call it my Detroit Players because any rapper can hire them and rap with them.

For context, My Detroit Players is a creative collective consisting of Emily Rogers, JRGotTheHits, Maestro, DJ Los, Nick Speed, and more. Touring musicians can hire them if they have a tour stop in Detroit. My Detroit Players have worked with artists such as Royce Da 5'9, Kid Vishis, Kdeezzy, etc.



FrostIsRad with Emily Rogers of My Detroit Players

E-Man: So, what can we expect from you tonight? Your traditional sound is pop punk but looking at their site, I'm noticing horns and trombones. How is this getting infused into the FrostIsRad mix?

Frost: It's not. **laughs** We're just gonna play our normal set because Detroit doesn't really know about us yet. People that are in the genre, they know. But it's gonna be a lot of people that don't listen to that or don't listen to it right now, so hearing our mix on it is gonna be a little different. Tonight we're just gonna do our thing.

E-Man: Curve ball question for people that may not be familiar with FrostIsRad's music, tell us the origin story. Before Frost, let's go into Jeremy(Frost), what got you into music?

Frost: Honestly, since I was a kid when little rock songs came on the TV, I've always really enjoyed it and I always pictured myself in ripped jeans. My mom tells this story about when we were at a family reunion, and I popped up on the karaoke machine with so much confidence. When I was young, I was super shy, like scared to dance in front of people and everything. But she knew, at that moment that I'd probably be doing some shit like that cause I was so confident with it. Besides that, when you got into the high school year, it was Eminem. Eminem had me ready, D12, Kanye, Kid Cudi, and those types of vibes. Then the punk shit, Green Day, Blink-182, Gym Class Heroes, Chiodos.

Frost: Umm, it's really just me bro. I'm just being myself, I really like emo artists that kinda make fun of their life; Kinda like Eminem. Eminem did get serious, but it was always a joke. He never really thought he was gonna go out and murder Kim. Then you go to Blink 182, pretty funny, pretty silly and that's just always been the vibe. I've always seen myself a Black Michael Cera or Black Seth Rogen. You know, just chill...Drink a beer, smoke some weed, laugh with my fans, and make fun of life.

E-Man: As an artist, what message are you trying to portray to your fan base or to the general public that listening?

Frost: Be yourself, don't take life too seriously, never give up. That's it.

E-Man: What keeps you motivated at the end of the day?

Frost: I'm not a quitter. If I say imma do something, imma do it... I gotta take care of my family and shit, but I wanna do it on my terms. I could have a corporate job, but I hustle hard so I can do what I love and can show my kids you can do what you want.

E-Man: Where do you see yourself taking this a couple of years from now? Even beyond music, where do you see yourself?

Frost: We goin' do everything, we gonna do movies, clothes, everything. We are the culture. I feel like, we represent the Detroit emo scene, an alternative scene, and when you think of Detroit, this is a different side of it and my goal is to show everyone just what that looks like.

E-Man: So, talk to me about the band?

Frost: **laughs**. Talk to them!



FrostIsRad with AV Club at My Detroit Players show

E-Man: From there, when did you start making music?

Frost: Shit, I've been making music since like 9th grade but it was on some hip hop battle rap shit, but in 10th, I switched into a pop rap thing, you know, kinda singing with the melodies, just evolving as an artist. I've tried just about every genre to get here. I always knew that if I could find the band, I could do the sound.

E-Man: So you kinda have this fusion of Pop Punk but keep it true to Detroit roots yet still keep these goofy kinda lyrics that go with it too. What's your inspiration behind this?



Dev of AV Club opening for TX2

E-Man: What brought you together?

Dev: Shit. Weed, and bitches.

Frost: AYYYY there we go!

Everyone laughs

Dev: Nah I'm just talking shit. It's the love of music man. We just want to rock out; ain't nobody rocking out right now.

We linked up and caught an Avengers vibe, everybody is crazy in their separate way and can do so many separate things so it was like a no-brainer when everybody linked up. Frost had a bunch of songs already, we fuck with his vibe and what he was on so we came together naturally. I feel like everyone has the same dream. VA said on Instagram that he always wanted to be in a rock band as a kid and I was on the same shit, so it made sense.

VA: Ayo, look bro, when I was like 18, I was playing guitar and said "when I get older I wanna retire playing bass in a rock band, just rock out on some silly shit".

E-Man: VA, I know you play a bunch of instruments in church and other gigs, so what got you into music in the first place?

VA: Marching band, concert band, trumpet was my first passion, first love, and then just fell in love with music, period.

E-Man: Dev, same question...

Dev: Growing up in church and just being around music all the time. That was part of it, but, when you listen to enough music you're just automatically gonna love it and that's what it was for me.

E-Man: They say that if you can play gospel music, you learn how to play everything. How true is that statement?

VA and Dev: Facts, fucking beyond true.

VA: After school, by the time I was in the 8th grade I was able to play at my church, I started on drums, then moved to organ. (They forced me to play the organ. I didn't wanna play it). But yeah, the church will help you learn every style of music, EVERY STYLE. It's crazy cause they'll have you doing complex stuff first, but if you stick with it, you'll get it all.

E-Man: Dev, what's your story, and what keeps you motivated, what keeps you going?

Dev: Honestly bro, my kids know that like the biggest thing for me now is giving them all the avenues that I can. My youngest son, I want him to play everything and be around everybody. So, meeting people like Frost, there's a synergy between my son and Frost in rehearsals so just trying to give him as many opportunities and experiences as possible.

E-Man: How did you first learn that you were the shit at drums?

Dev: Making beats in the lunchroom when niggas were rapping. That was my role in school, like I was the beat nigga, beating on the table with the pen and people were rapping to it. Then I take that and try to learn it on drums.

E-Man: What advice do you have for anybody that might get stagnant?

Dev: Stagnancy means death. You don't wanna die. You should always keep pushing because there's always something to learn. Even masters can learn something on a day-to-day basis, so just keep your eyes and ears open. As long as you stay open, you stay learning.

E-Man: What keeps you a student and wanting to learn more? Do you ever get to a point where you've learned what you want to learn and then plateau out?

Dev: I feel like God has a funny way of humbling people, and if you get to a point where you start to feel like that, then you might get around somebody who is just doing it at a way higher level. That can humble you, and that can hurt your ego, but it's always a good thing to be around people that are better than you. I encourage everybody to never stay around people who are on your level or below you, always look around to expand.

E-Man: What advice would you have for any up-and-coming musician?

Dev: Come to Detroit. It's so many great musicians, and so many up-and-coming artists. This next wave of artists, like the 20-25-year-olds, is about to be crazy.

E-Man: Anyone you wanna namedrop?

Dev: Nope, I want them to do it all. I don't wanna put unnecessary pressure on them either. Just be on the lookout for this next wave, they coming and they're killers!

E-Man: Animal, you play a shit ton of instruments, what all do you play?

Animal: My main instrument is guitar, but I play a little keyboard, bass, and drums as well.

E-Man: What's your story originally? How did Alex(Animal) get into music?

Animal: It's funny, I wasn't even thinking about getting into music, but, my mom was just looking for something to keep us out the streets and stuff like that, and then my dad had got locked up like a year before, so she was like, "yo, would you like to play guitar?" And I was like, yeah! So she bought me a guitar, I started just rocking out and the rest was history.

E-Man: So when did you learn "Oh shit, I'm good at this thing, I could potentially make a living off of this"?

Animal: It took me a long time, a long time, I didn't realize I could make a living off of this 'til my late 20s for real, like I've rocked out, and played with bands, my family band "Jakkd" for years.

E-Man: You say family band?

Animal: Yes

E-Man: Expand on that.



Brian, Animal, and VA opening for My Detroit Players

Animal: So Jakkd is my best friend Dwayne, and then there is my longtime friend Dorinda, my twin brother Jonathan, and my good friend Kevin Wilson, with me on guitar. We've been playing since high school. That was dope, but it was us messing around, doing some big stuff of course. But, when I realized I could start making money is when I started playing in churches and big groups. I didn't start doing that 'til my late 20s. I've played in about 10-plus bands, whether it be a freelance guitar player or somebody coming in. Normally, I don't go full into a band unless I got some kinda production rights with it or something like.

E-Man: What were your musical influences growing up?

Animal: Growing up it was Led Zeppelin, Nirvana. Around that time also a lot of J-Dilla because it was so different. I remember I got Led Zeppelin's *One* and Nirvana's *Nevermind* from Circuit City and it changed my life.

E-Man: What was your favorite Zeppelin album?

Animal: *One* for sure! Cause they had *Communication Breakdown* on that album.

E-Man: So what keeps you going in music?

Animal: So, lately I've been trying to figure that out *laughs* cause sometimes I don't know...umm...but, I used to have this outlook like I need to be the best and need to go to the next level, but I've been realizing all the people I've been meeting through music, I've appreciated just that, just meeting new people and being around my friends. Just being around good people and having good memories keeps me going. Before I was trying to do the whole rock star thing and get famous, but now it's about people that keep me going.

A month after these initial interviews, I caught up with Brian at Art Wraps festival in Hamtramck and decided to get his perspective on music.

E-Man: I'm sorry I missed you at the My Detroit Players show, but now I have a chance to talk to you about the past few weeks. So first of all, how was it playing the Michigan Central show?

Brian played guitar for Southwest Detroit-based Mariachi, Jalisco de Detroit during the Michigan Central opening on June 6, 2024.

Brian: Oh, the Michigan Central show was great, it was really cool. I got to see a lot of people and share some common spaces with some really big names, it was cool. I didn't wanna be a fanboy I guess but, yeah. I got to see some people like Jelly Roll, Slum Village, and Mike Epps. Playing traditional Mariachi music for Southwest Detroit was pretty cool, considering the big Mexican population that makes up that part of Detroit, and the culture that comes with it.

E-Man: So, what got you on the path of music?

Brian: Uhh, honestly...the path of music for me was kinda random. I just, one day I got internet and YouTube'd how to play guitar. I had an old acoustic and I just started to really like playing it. I started playing in church after that cause my mom was very religious when I was growing up and she took

me around. It sucked me in and then I was practicing, playing, and developing my skills. That's pretty much it.

E-Man: I dig it, man. What would you say were your biggest influences when you first started? What was that defining moment when you were like, "Yo, I think I can do that." Was it family? Was it watching something on TV? Was it hearing something? What was that moment like?

Brian: I think the moment when it hit me was when I was very young and I started to get good at guitar and people would always come to me, especially at church, and say "Your guitar is beautiful" or "That solo was crazy, God touched me" and I'd be like, "Maybe I can do this for real, like touch people with music for real with what I play" and that's when I really realized I can make it in music.

E-Man: Are you originally from Detroit?

Brian: No, I was born in Mexico City and immigrated here when I was 2 years old and I've been here for 24 years. My family's from Mexico and we all just immigrated here and we've been here ever since. This is home, this is what I know.

E-Man: In your eyes, how is the chemistry in AV Club? How does the team chemistry work? Say you're in the middle of a groove right? And you look to Animal who's ripping, then look to VA who's killing bass. How does that synergy work to find that rhythm?

Brian: It's kind of instinct, we look at each other and give glances and just know what to do. I've seen a lot of that happen between VA and Dev, especially since it's a drum and bass kind of thing so they're always locked in. If you notice at live shows, they'll give certain glances at each other for certain hits. They'll do it and not even talk to each other. That's how we do it or we'll just feed off of each other's grooves. After you play with someone for a while, there are certain things that they do a lot, or implement, or they'll hint at that you kinda get, but that sort of thing just comes with playing

with people for a long time; a certain type of people, it's like being musically monogamous...think it's a good thing to be a musical monogamous.

E-Man: How over time would you say that chemistry develops?

Brian: I would say, it would have to take a consistent thing; twice a week for like a year. What is that, say 4,000 hours?

E-Man: Uhh... 4,000? No, I think it's 10,000 hours!

Brian: You have to do that same thing with a band, even if you're good, you have to put that same time into a group, ya know?

E-Man: What's your advice for any up-and-coming artist?

Brian: Hmm, artist?

E-Man: Like the younger generation.

Brian: For me, I see myself not as an artist but more of a musician. My route has just been gigging and playing for people; I never like to have a name or anything, even though I make music, I haven't developed that yet, definitely more of a musician for now. I haven't developed my artistry, but I will do that as a next step for myself.

E-Man: As far as gigging goes, do you see yourself ever making solo music?

Brian: Yes, I definitely do. It's just not the time right now. Just certain things that are not in line for me to put it out.

E-Man: Do you think that that's part of the chemistry? Working with other bands, getting different sounds, mixing the pot all together to discover your own sound?



VA of AV Club opening for TX2 at Loving Touch

Brian: Yeah definitely, you learn that off of everybody. Playing with different groups, different musicians playing different genres. You learn a lot. That's one piece of advice I'd give to artists or musicians, don't stick to just one box, explore and get a feel for something else, pull from here and there, and make something spicy.

E-Man: Love that answer. What would you say keeps you motivated? Like what makes Brian get up and do this shit every day?

Brian: I think for me it's just knowing that it brings a lot of joy to people and I could do this for a living, not waking up in the morning and not going to a job that I don't wanna do. I just wanna live how I wanna live, make music, and make it on my own time. I like that control.

E-Man: What music are you currently listening to? On Beats, Brews, and Points of View, we do this segment called Something Old, Something New where we talk about an old album and a new album, so you can give me any side of

that you want. Could be something that came out yesterday, could be something that came out 50 years ago.

Brian: Shit, I've been listening to a lot of *Dark Side of The Moon* by Pink Floyd

E-Man: Great album, how that album is sequenced is absolutely crazy.

Brian: The whole thing was just crazy honestly, umm I've been listening to a lot of Mariachi music too.

E-Man: Ok! Can you give me some artists?

Brian: Mariachi Vargas that's a great one, you said the classics like Vicente Fernández is classic, Juan Gabriel, very famous man.

E-Man: What's your foundation for keeping you doing what you want to do? It's not always a straight and narrow path so when shit gets rocky what keeps you grounded and motivated to do what you want to do?

Brian: Honestly, this is gonna sound corny but the thing that keeps me motivated and grounded a lot of times is my mother. Whenever I feel like I'm going a little crazier just floating out and gravity is taking me away she just grounds me.

E-Man: I love that man, that's some genuine shit. Ummm, when was a time that you wanted to quit music? Or, we're you always like "fuck it, this is what I'm doing."?

Brian: Once I felt like that when I was going through a rough time but I think that it was a mixture of things, also it was winter time but that was a time I was thinking of changing my life path and doing something else. But, at the end of the day, I was humming, thinking about guitar, thinking about melodies, and thought to myself, "Why am I fighting it? This is literally me no matter what." So, I overcame it.

E-Man: How would you describe "Detroit Emo"? What would you think it sounds like?

Brian: I don't know, it's like some energetic, its....*sighs* you just have to come and see it for yourselves and yea come to a show. I have no idea yet. *laughs*

I've seen FrostIsRad and AV Club play a few times at this point and can honestly say I appreciate how they don't make every show the same. There are different variances for more of their popular songs such as. "Sometimes I Just Wanna Be Alone" and "Panic! At The Disco" make seeing the performance live a unique experience than the recorded version you can find on DSP's.

The show was great, the turnout was awesome, and even got some lasagna and a studio tour from Maestro of My Detroit Players out of it.

Recently, FrostIsRad played Pugfest in Ferndale, a yearly festival displaying various forms of art from painters, comedians, and musicians. He was notified about the festival last year by Shawn from Arctic Circle Brewing Compa-

ny(Our sponsor over at Beats, Brews, and Points of View) where he got to play alongside one of his favorite bands, Michael Cera Palin.

After the festival, I had a few follow-up questions for Frost.

E-Man: Is there a bubbling pop punk scene in Detroit?

Frost: Good question, so, it is, for sure. A lot of dope bands that I've been seeing. The crazy thing is, we kinda just made it into the bubbling pop-punk scene ourselves. For the longest, we were only getting booked on emo rap acts. Last year, we were sought out for this TX2 show by Kickstand Productions. Shout out to Brandon Benson for putting me on their radar. Nate did a great job lining us up with TX2 and Kid Baron. TX2 is a blend of emo rap with emo everything else, they do a great job. We complemented them very well and from there, we've been playing a lot more; we've made our way into the scene itself. We've done a few shows with Pleasant Underground, the show that we can't call 420 Fest, that was awesome and that's what led to Pugfest. So yeah, Detroit has a very hot Pop-Punk, midwest emo, alternative scene.

E-Man: How do you think Detroit artists can be more united?

Frost: I can speak from things I do to stand more united. If I'm with an artist and I see that they might be in a chapter in a part that I've already been through as far as my artist career goals, I'll just drop gems. I'll just try to give them a shift in the way they look or think about things. For example, one of my close friends who is an artist, I talk to her every once in a while and sometimes she's too focused on the numbers, and I'll just remind her that the numbers are what they're gonna be so focused on the craft and squint on the rewards. That helps take you a long way.

Another thing is if you're in the room and an opportunity pops up, don't be afraid to suggest someone who may be better for the opportunity-someone who would kill the shit. I've been in rooms and an artist is looking for someone to sing a



FrostIsRad Opening for TX2 at The Loving Touch

hook for an R&B record, and they ask, “Frost, sing this hook” and it’s just not my vibe, so I Facetime my R&B friends. Shows as well, if you don’t think it’ll be a great fit. Pay it forward and put your people in positions to win. If you’re a Detroit artist, and you mess with another Detroit artist, put a Detroit artist in the position to win. And of course, speak highly about your brothers and sisters.

E-Man: What do you think you add to the Detroit music scene?

Frost: I think we add what any great artist does, another way to look at your city, another representation of how it looks to grow up in Detroit or how it looks to be from Detroit. My music is full of stories from my childhood and adulthood and it’s just textured and layered with the aesthetic that is me. I’m a Detroit west side dude who played hockey, is into anime, likes silly comedies, and relates his life to those types of things. Everyone in the band is just a different version of Detroit that you haven’t seen. You have Brian from Southwest, VA, and Alex from the east side...you know what I’m saying, all of us come from Detroit. It’s just really like that, we just show what Detroit looks like to us, and we give you a sound for it too.

E-Man: Are any new projects, singles, or shows coming?

Frost: We’re working on a new album, it’s called *Lil Emo Boy* hoping to put it out in November. If not, we’ll have some singles dropping in August/September um, *Find Frosty* is in full effect, if you wanna come out, were popping up and doing secret shows in crazy places, some you might not have heard of, some you may heard of. Some places you’ll be like, “You can do a show there?” We’re going to do a show there, don’t know if you can but we will be.

Find Frosty is a series of secret shows hosted by FrostIsRad throughout the City of Detroit. If you’re interested in attending, call or text 313-437-3813 to get on the list and you’ll get a text with the address of the next event location. This idea was inspired by the 2008 movie “Nick and Nora’s Infinite Playlist” Where’s Fluffy.

You can follow any FrostIsRad updates at <https://linktr.ee/FROSTisRAD>

*All photos were taken by E-Man Bates.

runner