“The present day composer REFUSES to die”

– Edgard Varese
Vaultmeisterment in today’s society is pretty much the exclusive purview of Joe Travers and is confined to the highly ambient UMRK facility. Lucky us—and by us I do mean all of us who get to experience the wonderment that otherwise lurks forever in the Vault—but for Joe—the music that continually inspires his dedication. These titles are from a collection of live performances (1972) selected and mixed by FZ between 1972 and 1977. Yes, that’s right. Every item was produced by FZ. All tracks were recorded live. No overdubs. All the edits are by FZ. Just to put things into perspective, concurrent with these mixes (fade: slowly, into the background) Zappa produced Over-Nite Sensation, Apostrophe(‘), Roxy & Elsewhere, One Size Fits All, Bongo Fury, Zoot Allures, Zappa in New York and wrote & conceived a lot of other stuff while touring Europe, Japan, Australia, and the U.S. & Canada a few times.

Joe (the Vaultmeister) went looking for performances by this band in particular because there are people out there who went to these shows and/or are otherwise invested with desire for these concerts to live in the privacy of their own sound systems. Charles Ulrich is but one of those to whom we owe our gratitude for persistence and valor in the pursuit of Petitness in the Wazoo department. And Joe lives for the Vault—and the unleashing of the tapes—and found them—spread
over several reels of 1/4 inch 2 track masters. He transferred all the tracks from the original 2 track mixdowns at UMRK. Then he put this compilation together—and this is only the beginning. What a great place to start.

This is the **10 Piece Band** as ordained by FZ who also called it the Mothers of Invention, although at this point in time and space this entitlement was more a marketing device and part of the conceptual continuity. For everyone on the other side of the speaker cabinets however, it will always be the Petit Wazoo.

And it is:

**FRANK ZAPPA**  Conductor, Guitar, Vocals

**MALCOLM MCNABB**  Trumpet

**GARY BARONE**  Trumpet/ Flugelhorn

**TOM MALONE**  Tuba/Saxes/Piccolo Trumpet/Trumpet

**EARL DUMLER**  Woodwinds

**GLENN FERRIS**  Trombone

**BRUCE FOWLER**  Trombone

**TONY DURAN**  Slide Guitar

**DAVE PARLATO**  Bass

**JIM GORDON**  Drums
1. **Oddients** 1:13
   Montreal, Canada 10.27.72

2. **Rollo** 3:21
   Philadelphia, PA 11.10.72 (Show 1)

3. **Been To Kansas City In A Minor** 10:15
   Kansas City, MO 12.2.72

4. **Farther O’Blivion** 16:02
   Unknown

5. **D.C. Boogie** 13:27
   Washington, D.C., 11.11.72 (Show 1)

6. **Imaginary Diseases** 9:45
   Waterbury, CT 11.1.72

7. **Montreal** 9:11
   Montreal, Canada 10.27.72
Many have tried to define who Frank was as a creative entity, but everything he wrote, played, sang or said further defined him as exquisitely indefinable. Imaginary Diseases is yet another Zappa jewel that places his body of work far beyond any limitation of label or category. And that’s the way we like it.

Within the body of the fourth track on this album, “Farther O’Blivion,” we can hear elements and sketches from what ended up being parts of “The Steno Pool.” Most of them that became parts of “Greggery Peccary,” “Be-Bop Tango,” “Cucamonga,” as well as parts to possibly a number of other reconstructions that we may never discover. Although many of the mirrored reshapings of his audio delectables may never be identified, I nonetheless add to the “Conceptual Continuity” of Frank’s musical universe.

Frank is now celebrated as an artist of historical significance, and the future will see him thusly celebrated even more so. The documenting of musical history shows us that the future is not biased by the musical trends of its past. Thank God.

As a guitarist who worked with Frank, I am fortunate to have played in several of his bands. I’ve transcribed countless hours of his guitar-playing, and have stood three feet from him on stage for many months of touring and witnessed him play an average of 1 1/2 hours of guitar solos each night.

Listening to his guitar work on this record further confirms that there is no limit to his improvisational ability to create instantaneous compositions on the instrument. He seems to never repeat himself, it always works, and it feels damn good.

If you’re a first-time listener of Frank’s music and you happened onto Imaginary Diseases, you might find yourself scratching your head and pondering, “Huh, I’ve never heard anything as diverse, musical and just plain fun as this.” You may even find yourself feeling a trifle disturbed about having been sold a bill of goods by corporate radio programming that rarely includes Frank’s music but instead shoves freeze-dried audio insipidity down your throat.

And if you are already a hardcore Frank fan, you’re far from alone. After listening to this album, you may find yourself scratching your head and pondering in disbelief how it is possible on God’s Grey Earth that there is this guy who passed away at the untimely age of 52 (young for a composer), who could very well be considered the most prolific artist in history, and whose body of work stands as a testament to the potential of human creative achievement, the style of which is utterly unclassifiable — only one of the many components that set Frank apart as a true genius.

And you, Zappa aficionado, after consuming his catalog for the past 30 (maybe even more like 40) years and fetishing every little shining morsel of the gems he made available, perhaps you may even know more about those morsels than most others of your ilk. Ponder this:

He built a vault in his front yard and buried innumerable treasures like this one, and this plethora of unreleased recordings is so vast that even in the remainder of your own life (regardless of how old you are at the time you are reading this), you will never get to hear all of it.

What the fuck, Frank?

Just maybe you are someone who has been so touched by Frank’s work that you wish you could grab him by the shoulders and say, “Do you realize what you have done for me and the quality of my life? How could anyone have such timeless, fathomless vision? Do you know that I love you?”

But then comes that bittersweet smack-in-the-face reminder that Frank had the audacity to leave us before we ever had the chance.

Jeez, the nerve.

Another listen, please — this time a little louder,

STEVE VAI

Produced by FRANK ZAPPA


“DEMOCRACY DOESN’T WORK UNLESS YOU PARTICIPATE.” -FZ REGISTER. VOTE.
Music is the BEST MUSIC.