



## Loose Record August 2005



A.R.E. Weapons  
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Q&A  
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***A.R.E. Weapons** is a three-piece, noise-by way-of –thrash rock band out of Brooklyn. Jarvis Cocker, of Pulp fame, was turned on to the group a few years back in New York and brought them to the attention of Rough Trade Records.*

*After just one release, the relationship soured.*

*Despite some tough introductions to the music business, A.R.E. Weapons have returned this fall with their second album, *Free In The Street*, released*

*by New York independent label, Defend Music.*

*Loose caught up with lead singer Brain F. McPeck and chit-chatted about their new album, labels, and antagonism.*

Loose Record: Hello, is this Brain ?

Brain: Yes.

LR: Hey Brain, this is Mike at Loose, do you have a few moments to chat?

BM: I do, definitely.

LR: Great...I got the new album, *Free In The Streets*, and would like to start off there. Talk about the recording process of this new one, if you could – anything that comes to mind.

BM: Well, we were screwed for money basically. We talked people into lending us money to rent a studio. We ended up in Park Slope [Brooklyn], in a big factory that had thirty-foot high ceilings, and we basically cranked it out in three-and-a-half weeks.

LR: Compared to your last recording, was that about an average length in the recording process, or was this longer or shorter?

BM: Well, it was about the same. But, since we were on our own money, we were on it more. It was self produced, which did have its ups and downs. But yeah, we cranked it out. We worked on it pretty much everyday. Mixed it in about a week.

LR: Because you did this all yourself, did you find this process rewarding?

BM: Yes, yes we did. I mean, we had to listen to every little thing, like two hundred times, but recording it was the most fun.

LR: Do you think that your sound has changed over the years, or from your last record at all?

BM: Well, yeah, it has changed. I hate to say evolved, because that sounds queer (laughs). But with the addition of a live drummer, it definitely sounds different ... maybe heavier .... a little less juvenile. I'm happy with the state of things ... and we have been working on so much new material already, so we're ready to go back in the studio in December and have something out in April of next year. We don't want another two-year span between albums.

LR: Have these new batches of songs that make up *Free in the Streets* been tested out live yet?

BM: About half we've played already. Old songs more, it seemed. We played a show in the basement of the Tribeca Grand last month (July) and we played all new songs from this upcoming album, and it went perfectly. And there was about a hundred people there and the whole thing was very encouraging.

LR: So are there tour plans shaping up?

BM: I think so, in November, for about three-and-a-half weeks. We'll hit the relatively major markets. We're playing shows here in New York; a few in Canada, and we have a Philly-D.C. trip lined up.

LR: Speaking of your live act, that reminds me - the All Music Guide said that you garnered a reputation for having very "confrontational" shows. What do they mean by this? I don't get it.

BM: Well, I think that's a misinterpretation of us. What they might mean, or might be more accurate, is that we are messy or sloppy.

LR: So you don't fight with your audience, which I was having trouble picturing you do?

BM: No, but if we did, I guess that would be my job, to break bottles and go out in the audience, since I'm the lead singer (laughs).

LR: Back to the new album real quick, lyrically, would you say there are any themes that are running throughout?

BM: Lets see ... (pauses) ...We wanted it to capture the feeling of people walking down the street, and feeling really psyched. And also, it's about people having a dark side. There seems to be a lot running through about the night - dark stuff. But I don't think that was intentional.

LR: Do you have any influences that seem to keep popping up?

BM: Nothing new; it's been pretty much the same for the last 10 years. Iggy, the Velvets, the second Ramones album. Anything with that sort of vibe they give off - that "New Yorky" vibe. They were all tough it seemed, but not assholes about it.

LR: Real quick, and I'll let you go- how did you hook up with Defend Music?

BM: We met Michael (of Defend) around and he seemed really eager to work with us. He really was the first person to come to us and he made us feel wanted. Which was radically different than where we before. There we felt like the bastard step-children and we were definitely at the bottom of the shuffle there. But Michael got our demo of this new album and really liked it, so we took it from there.

LR: That's great. Thanks so much for taking time to talk to us. And good luck this fall, with everything!

BM: No problem!