

Memories

We asked a few dozen writers, musicians, fans and club owners to reflect on their involvement with Triangle music. The best of those responses are collected below.

The memory is vague, and it reaches back beyond the *Independent's* genesis in 1983, but to me no event so pungently evokes the true independence of the rock scene that has enlivened the Triangle for well over 30 years: Sometime circa 1979-80, th' Cigaretz opened for Arrogance at Town Hall, a massive rock club that once dominated the main block of Chapel Hill's Franklin Street. To those who don't recall either band, this bill was somewhat akin to the Sex Pistols opening for the Eagles; to the uninitiated, it might have seemed an anomaly bordering on an abomination.



To me, it made perfect sense: I'd seen Arrogance debut at a short-lived psychedelic joint outside of Chapel Hill in the fall of 1969. We were all teenagers and they were unbelievably loud and electric. Within two years, they'd given up the Stratocasters for acoustic guitars and were becoming known for the muscular beauty of their singing and songwriting. They pioneered playing original material in local rock clubs, and making and self-releasing their own records, novel practices that would become articles of faith for subsequent generations of rockers.

Th' Cigaretz blasted onto the Raleigh scene, unforgettably, by allegedly inciting the "May Day Police Riot" of 1978, in which scores of hapless partiers at a street fair were clubbed and arrested by Raleigh's finest. Th' Cigz were the purest local embodiment of punk energy that North Carolina could have wished for (or, if one were a police captain, dreaded). They were anarchic, incendiary and brilliantly satiric.

The idea of the two bands sharing the same stage came, I'm sure, from the fact that the Arrogance guys completely got what the Cigaretz were up to. But this was a watershed moment in terms of audiences and sensibilities, and Arrogance's long-hair-and-jeans crowd jostling against the Cigz' skinny-tie coterie guaranteed an oil-and-water standoff.

If memory serves, th' Cigaretz got booed, then Arrogance's Robert Kirkland insulted his own fans for their clueless boorishness. No doubt some club-goers that night went home totally baffled, if not outraged.

But the musicians understood: This was not about fashion. It was about music —and the constant imperative to trash boundaries. —*Godfrey Cheshire*