

DON'T LABEL IT!

April 2009

The Return of Pansy Division!



Xanna Don't reviews Jon Ginoli 's new book, the band's documentary DVD, and their first new album in six years

plus Janell Rock 's posthumous musical contribution to breast cancer awareness and Megan St. James partakes of Feast

DON'T LABEL IT!

About us: *In the temporary print absence of Labrys Magazine, we are: **Don't Label It!** Previously published in the 1990's in **Austin, Texas**, it began as Xanna Don't's band newsletter and evolved into a regional nightlife and music publication. She's revived the concept of cross pollinating on paper the worlds she's always lived in: the live music scene, film happenings, and the gay community. Within these pages, they co-exist in harmony, with guest food columnist, Megan St. James. Thanx for picking us up!*

dontlabelit@gmail.com

APRIL SWEEPSTAKES!!!

*Be among the first 25 readers to email us with the subject line "HOCKEY TIX" at [**dontlabelit@gmail.com**](mailto:dontlabelit@gmail.com) to qualify to*

win 2 tickets to

THE THRASHERS on April 7th.

declared, debated, and deflowered:

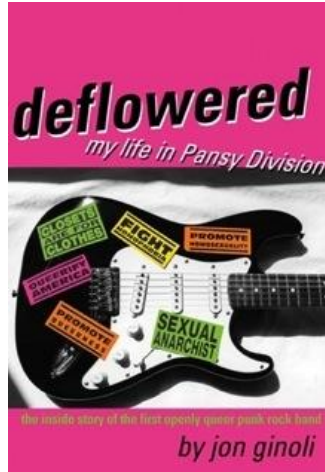
PANSY DIVISION returns with an abundant spring crop

by Xanna Don't

Pansy Division, the perennial pioneers of queercore rock'n'roll, are germinating gaily again this spring! With their first new CD in six years, an award-winning documentary film on DVD, and a freshly published book, founding band member **Jon Ginoli**'s memoir of their journey, Pansy Division's eighteenth year as a band may prove to be its most fruitful yet.

The song *Cowboys Are Frequently Secretly Fond of Each Other* enjoyed a renaissance with the release of *Brokeback Mountain* when it was rerecorded by Willie Nelson in 2006.

Would it have enjoyed such mainstream welcome if Pansy Division hadn't covered the obscure gem for the compilation album, *Stop Homophobia, Volume 1* in 1994? Maybe not. Had it not been for the evolution of Pansy Division over two decades, would so many of Atlanta's openly GLBT performers, largely the progeny of Blake's On The Park's dearly departed *Southern Exposure* music series, including Sean Kagalis, Wayne Fishell & Big



Peaches, Mike Rickard, Flat Cat, Amber Taylor & The Sexual Side Effects, and a lesser known alt-country vocalist from Boston by way of Austin named Xanna Don't enjoy such freedom with our lyrical pronouns, our acts, and the gigs we're able to

book? Very likely not. As Pansy Division, guitarist and lead vocalist Jon Ginoli and bassist **Chris Freeman**, along with a constantly evolving roster of gay drummers (comically chronicled in their Last Rites DVD documentary, **Pansy Division: Life In A Gay Rock Band**), fiercely and fearlessly forged the most solidly paved road to greater gay acceptance in the music industry. They refused to compromise. It was never an option for them.

The early chapters of **deflowered: my life in Pansy Division** (Cleis Press) resonate for anyone over the age of thirty who ever dreamed of doing a band within the gay community. For both Jon and Chris, pursuing music meant giving up their social lives; no matter what city you lived in, the live music scene and the gay scene barely intersected in the 1980s and early '90s. They were two opposing worlds. Jon's dedication to music in 1985 resulted in an entire year of celibacy! And Chris had a boyfriend of three years who refused to come see the band, eventually resulting in their break up. Curiously enough, they both found friendship and musical camaraderie through lesbian bands of that era, including Two Nice Girls, Tribe 8, and Sleater Kinney. Of their compatibility with gig mates Bikini Kill, Jon explains, "We were feminists, too. We just happened to be men." Gay men. They were the first openly gay men fronting pop punk/rock music. They used no costumes, no make-up, and sometimes no clothes at all! It all began with them.



The book is punctuated with Jon's tour diaries, similar in high quality to Henry Rollins' classic, *Get In The Van: On The Road with Black Flag*. The highlights are during their big arena tour with the band Green Day in 1994—they were thrust upon mainstream America by their popular yet

loyal label chums on Lookout Records. The rollercoaster ride of being marginally accepted in some cities, getting pelted with sticky big gulps in Los Angeles, bulletted with shoes, lighters, and \$40 in loose change to the hiss and drone of boos in Detroit, and then redeemed in New York with radio plugs from Howard Stern (who they initially mistook for Joey Ramone) will have you crying

and cheering at swift, manic intervals. For their lone show in the south on that tour, a conservative promoter tried to dump them off the bill; Green Day responded by refusing to play if Pansy Division didn't. It was a tense low, but ultimately, hanging out backstage as Green Day played Saturday Night Live on the eve of Jon's 35th birthday would only be eclipsed when, 48 hours later, Pansy Division took the stage of Madison Square Garden. Helluva ride.

That ride continues on ***That's So Gay*** (Alternative Tentacles). The title cut, written and sung by Chris, articulates the outrage we should all feel at that now banal yet still omnipresent phrase: "The next time you say it, you better think twice; some pissed off faggot may not take it so nice!" On *20 Years of Cock*, in true Pansy Division fashion, Jon exuberantly sings, "I've had twenty years of cock, and I'm never gonna stop!" The glee in his voice on this tune, which clocks in at 1 minute and 39 seconds like a hardcore ditty, is just as infectiously shocking as on their early vinyl singles. He's not stuck in the same place; he keeps reinventing the geography. And it's always a happy place. Despite being copied by every tween/teen/twenty-something pop punk band, Pansy Division's sound is still so arresting and audacious! When the rest of the band, **Luis Illades** on drums, newcomer **Joel Reader** on guitar, and Chris lend their shouts to the chorus, the song explodes like a teenage pop anthem. As is often echoed in Jon's book, his band was never about the Judy Garland-esque moan and torture of being gay. Their music has always been jubilant; at times pissed off, but ever joyful. It's what makes them one of the most sought after gay pride performers in the country. Pansy Division created a new generation of gay music.

Jon Ginoli

readings/acoustic performances:

April 22 @ OutWrite Books, ATL - 7 pm
April 22 @ Blake's On The Park, ATL - 9 pm
April 23 @ Criminal Records, ATL - 7 pm
April 24 @ Waldenbooks, CNN Center, Noon



www.pansydivision.com

Pansy Division: Life In A Gay Rock Band screens:

April 20 @ Flashpoint, Washington DC

www.pansydivisionfilm.com

April 21 @ Marvell Events Center, Durham NC

www.alternativetentacles.com

www.cleispress.com

encounters

April 4

Spring Group Show:
Jerald Mask, David
Hansford and Amy
Bradford @ The Seen
Gallery, Decatur GA
theseengallery.com

April 4 & 5

Glenwood Park All
Weather Farmers'
Market, ATL
gpfm.blogspot.com

April 7

Vivian Girls
@ The Earl, ATL
[myspace.com/
viviangirlsnyc](http://myspace.com/viviangirlsnyc)



April 9

GoGirls ROCK Show
@ Sweetwater,
Duluth GA
[myspace.com/
atlantachapter
gogirlsmusic](http://myspace.com/atlantachaptergogirlsmusic)

April 10

Kate Maki
@ The Earl, ATL
katemaki.com

April 12—Easter

Armorettes'
Drag Races
@ Burkhart's, ATL
burkharts.com

1st Annual Easter
Bonnet Contest
with Nicole Paige

Brooks @
Bellissima ATL
[myspace.com/
bellissima_lounge](http://myspace.com/bellissima_lounge)

Allison Weiss with
Bess Rogers and Allie
Moss @ Kavarna,
Decatur GA
[myspace.com/
allisonweiss](http://myspace.com/allisonweiss)

April 13

Leslie and the Ly's
@ The Earl, ATL
leslieandthelys.com



April 14

The First Annual
Shuler Hensley
Awards for Excellence
in High School Musical
Theater @ The Cobb
Energy Centre, ATL
[cobbenergy
centre.com](http://cobbenergycentre.com)

April 16

Jennifer Hudson
@ The Fox, ATL
[jenniferhudson
online.com](http://jenniferhudsononline.com)

April 16—25

Atlanta Film Festival
@ Rialto Center and
Midtown Art Cinema
[atlantafilm
festival365.com](http://atlantafilmfestival365.com)

April 17

Melinda Kingsley @
Red Light Café, ATL
[myspace.com/
themelindakingsley
band](http://myspace.com/themelindakingsleyband)

April 17—19

73rd Annual Atlanta
Dogwood Festival @
Piedmont Park, ATL
dogwood.org



April 18

Mike Geier's "Tongo Hiti" with Dames Aflame @ Trader Vic's tradervicsatlanta.com

Atlanta Rollergirls Roller Derby @ Yaarab Shrine Center atlantaroller.girls.com

Syrens of The South 2nd Annual Spring Chicken Show @ Relapse Theater, ATL syrensofthesouth.com

Cramps Tribute @ East Atlanta Icehouse eastatlantaicehouse.com

April 20

Samantha Crain and The Midnight Shivers @ The Earl, ATL samanthacrain.com



April 21

Act of Congress @ Smith's Olde Bar myspace.com/actofcongress



April 22

Jon Ginoli of Pansy Division @ OutWrite Books and Blake's On The Park with Flat Cat -ATL pansydivision.com

April 23—26

Merlefest @ Wilkes Community College, Wilkesboro, NC merlefest.org

April 24

Sharon McCusker presents, "In The Name of God" @ Georgia State University (Arts & Humanities Bldg) gsu.edu

Lunchtime reading with Jon Ginoli of Pansy Division @ Waldenbooks CNN Center pansydivision.com

April 25

Atlanta Opera Company presents *The Flying Dutchman* @ The Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre, ATL atlantaopera.org

April 26

"The L Word" restarts from the beginning @ Paris Decatur, Decatur GA myspace.com/parisdecatur



April 30

The People vs Leo
 Frank premiere/benefit
 @ The Cobb Energy
 Performing Arts
 Centre, ATL gpb.org

April 30—May 2

Clayton County
 Firefighters
 Fundraiser, ATL
[myspace.com/
 southsidemusicfestival](http://myspace.com/southsidemusicfestival)

April 30**thru May 9**

500 Songs For Kids:
 "500 Most Passionate
 Songs of All Time"
 @ Smith's Olde Bar
[songsforkids
 foundation.org](http://songsforkidsfoundation.org)

May 1-3

Swiftwaters 30th
 Anniversary *with*
 Ronnda Cadle, Cell,
 Lindsey Hinckle,
 Barb Carbon (pictured),
 more, Dahlonega, GA
swiftwaters.com

**May 6**

Leslie Dysinger
 @ Concerts in the
 Square, Decatur, GA
decaturga.com

May 7

Betty Harris
 @ The Earl, ATL
[myspace.com/
 bettyharris](http://myspace.com/bettyharris)

**May 7—9**

City Skies Festival @
 Kavarna, Decatur GA
[myspace.com/
 instantkavarna](http://myspace.com/instantkavarna)

May 14

National Black Justice
 Coalition Fundraiser
with Kia Hamm,
 Duncan Teague, DJ

Fire, & Ebonee
 Bradford
 @ *the home of*
 Mitchell Gold & Bob
 Williams, Buckhead
 ATL

[www.myspace.com/
 kiahamm2](http://www.myspace.com/kiahamm2)

May 17

ALHI's SPRING
 FLING @ Callanwolde
thehealthinitiative.org

May 22

Jeremy Thornton @
 Smith's Olde Bar, ATL
[myspace.com/
 jeremythornton](http://myspace.com/jeremythornton)

May 23

Decatur Arts Festival,
 Decatur GA
[www.decaturarts
 festival.com](http://www.decaturartsfestival.com)

May 27

The Atlanta Dream
 @ Phillips Arena
atlantadream.net

May 29

Jennie McNulty &
 Vickie Shaw @
 Unitarian Universalist
 Congregation, ATL
jenniemcnulty.com

WHAT THE L ???

by *Melanie McDougald*

Radio Announcer: We have a caller on line one with break-up issues.

Doctor: Hello, you're on the air with GLBTQIQConfused, the nimble show with the unwieldy acronym where the doctor is always *out*. What's your confusion?

Caller: I can't believe it ended this way. I mean, my friends never really cared for her, but I always thought she was just misunderstood. And now she's gone. I don't understand what happened, or who's responsible. I feel like I've wasted the last six years of my life. How could I not have seen this coming? And now, I can't sleep, I feel abandoned and at loose ends, especially on Sunday nights.

Doctor: Why Sundays? You're regular church goers?

Caller: No, viewers.

Doctor: Voyeurs?

Caller: No. Viewers. Of Showtime. "The L Word."

Doctor: (sigh) Perhaps it would help you to talk about your confusion.

Caller: Well, it all started out great. I was so excited about seeing lesbians on TV. And not just token lesbians like on that other show about all the gay guys, or that TV sitcom with the lesbian bookstore owner, but all lesbians all the time. I was so attracted to Jenny.

Doctor: Your ex?

Caller: No! Jenny Schecter. On "The L Word." Are you straight or something?

Doctor: Did you not get the double entendre? "Where the doctor is always..."

Caller: "Out." Yes, but it could mean like...

Doctor: It doesn't. Continue. Jenny Schecter? Why were you attracted to her?

Caller: Because I identified with her. She went to LA to be with her boyfriend and discovers her lesbianism...

Doctor: And you left a straight relationship for a woman?

Caller: No, lifelong lesbian. And she was from the Midwest.

Doctor: And you are from?

Caller: Atlanta.

Doctor: Of course you are.

Caller: She was a creative type, you know? A writer.

Doctor: And you are a what? A horticulturist?

Caller: A writer. Didn't you hear me say I identified with her? Are you really a doctor?

Doctor: No, gay for pay sweetie. Of course I'm a doctor!



Caller: I just felt a connection. She lands in LA with all these fabulous women and the story seems to be about these intricate and complex lives: there's Shane, who can't keep a job but can have any woman she wants; Bette and Tina, the lesbian power couple; Dana, the closeted professional tennis player; Alice, the wacky, small-press writer; and Marina, the sultry European owner of a struggling lesbian coffee/wine bar. They seemed like women I know, or might know, or, well actually, would never in a million years get within 100 miles of but sure would like to know, if you know what I mean.

Doctor: I understand you perfectly.

Caller: Then things seemed to change. Like, suddenly they never worked and they were wearing, like, designer clothes and had cute cars and great homes. Jenny worked as a grocery clerk for crying out loud! Then she's suddenly got a best selling memoir and then a movie deal, and she's directing.

Doctor: What was her book about?

Caller: "The L Word."

Doctor: Pardon?

Caller: She writes a thinly veiled tell-all about herself and her friends, and it's this huge hit.



Doctor: She writes about the show she's on? She re-tells the show? And the film?

Caller: Based on the book. Duh! It's not like this show is a complete fantasy. I mean, that's how these things happen. You sell a gabillion books, and bam! You get a movie deal.

Doctor: Is this your experience?

Caller: No, but any day. See why I identify with Jenny?

Doctor: Clearer all the time. So, this character gets to film "The L Word" itself?

Caller: Yeah, and there are these other weird things, too. Like everyone *hates* Jenny, right? But Jenny ends up with Shane, who everyone *wants*. The least popular character gets the most popular character, and all my friends are like "Ewww," and "Gross!" Well, the characters on the show did the same thing.

Doctor: Ended up with Shane?

Caller: No. I'm not feeling heard.

Doctor: You are! By several hundred-thousand people. Continue, please. The characters on the show reacted negatively to Jenny? Or to Jenny's relationship with Shane?

Caller: Both! Like, there was this one part where Alice is asking Shane "How good is it?" And they're like, eating yogurt, right? And Shane is like, "It's like this good," and "It's like that good." Wait a minute.

Doctor: Yes?



Caller: The actor who plays Alice is in those yogurt commercials, the ones with the bridesmaids hanging out, saying, “This is ‘getting out of this dress’ good,” and, “This is ‘not catching the bouquet’ good.” Hello! Lesbian subtext much? It’s a lot like that scene.

Doctor: So, it seems there’s an extra-textual quality with a deconstructivist element. In addition, the character of Jenny seems to be gesturing towards an authorial presence within the context of the fictional narrative itself.

Caller: Wow! That’s—what?

Doctor: Tell me more about Jenny.

Caller: She seemed to know stuff, like about the others that they didn’t really know.

Doctor: Can you give me some examples?

Caller: Sure. Like in the first season, she was writing this story about her affair with Marina, the hot cafe owner. And she’s rewriting it because her former writing professor says she should play up the sex part—total straight guy response, no surprise. But while she’s writing, she channels this demon, this Abraxas, and Abraxas is the demon of lies, and he looks like the writing professor. But what’s weird is that everyone else, Bette, Tina, Alice, Alice’s mom, Shane, Dana and Dana’s new hottie, Lara are all in Bette and Tina’s pool next door. So while they’re all saying things (or not saying things) to each other, Abraxas is telling Jenny all this and she’s writing it down. She sees stuff.

Doctor: So Abraxas is like her muse?

Caller: Yeah! Like, exactly!

Doctor: Like, Jenny gets insights, like the creator of the show might, like, know. Like, cool.

Caller: Are you mocking me?

Doctor: Pardon?

Caller: You’re totally doing the “like” thing!

Doctor: Like, right—I mean, no! Merely a sign of my engagement with your story. Ahem! Please, do continue.

Caller: Anyway, she also started calling a character (this chick who gives her a bad review) “the vagina wig,” because her name was Merkin. So, I’m like, what? I look it up and Merkin *does* mean vagina wig! And when Max was being a total pig while he was transitioning, acting all straight male-privileged, Jenny tells him that he won’t ever be that, can’t ever be that, and Max starts making different choices. You know?

Doctor: Jenny’s last name is Schecter? S-C-H-E-C-T-E-R?

Caller: Yeah. Well, part of Max’s decisions end up with him being pregnant, like...

Doctor: From the real life stories of the FTM who was recently pregnant?

Caller: Exactly! So do you see why she’s such a problem? Jenny I mean?

Doctor: Indeed.



TO BE CONTINUED...

A FEAST HAPPENING IN DECATUR

by Megan St. James

Craving great food in a cozy, comfortable setting? It's time to FEAST. The restaurant's immediate feel is as if you are in Teri Rogers' home with some of her best friends for a fun-filled evening. Teri digs into her experiences with the Peasant Restaurant Group, Darkhorse Tavern, and the infamous Pearl's Café in the mountains of Tennessee to bring us FEAST.

An extensive list of martinis reflects current events, like the Obama-tini and the Palin-tini. But I decided to go healthy with the Pomegranate Martini—it made me feel really good. Greg, our waiter, recommended the 2006 Doña Paula Malbec from the well-crafted wine list to escort our palate through the creations of Chef Melissa Fedorko (Grove Park Inn, La Tavola, PieBar). Its silky texture made its raspberry/ black cherry with a hint of violets beckon food.

Chef Melissa's approach is simple yet fun, sourcing most of her goods from local community farmers. Earthy Crimini, Portobello and Shitake Mushroom Chips with a savory Gorgonzola Sour Cream sauce and a hint of white pepper got things going. After getting the dipping thing down, things got out of control with the delicate flavors of the Oven Roasted Lump Blue Crab & Artichoke Dip served with warm pita.

All three salads are unique and worth trying. Romaine lettuce and marinated red onions tossed in tangy Mediterranean-style kalamata olive vinaigrette with a touch of feta cheese had zing in every bite. The Feast Salad of mixed field greens with gorgonzola, sweet pecans, juicy Bosc pear slices, and balsamic infused vinaigrette explodes with flavors. My favorite was the Baby Arugula tossed in walnut oil and lemon juice with butternut squash, dried cranberries, pumpkin seeds, and Manchego cheese from La Mancha. Melissa somehow made the bitterness of Arugula disappear. Don Quixote would be proud.

The feast really embarked when Greg delivered the entrees. Delicate Nantucket Bay Sea Scallops were garnished with exotic black truffle butter, a heavenly contrast. A juicy, melt-in-your-mouth Grilled White Marble Farms Berkshire Pork Chop was deconstructed off the bone in demi-glace. Chinese



five-spice rubbed Duck Breast was an explosion of mind-blowing flavors ranging from cinnamon to ginger. I wondered if Sichuan pepper would arrive; it did. Chopped Brussels sprouts with applewood bacon, sweet potato fries, and oven-roasted asparagus with shaved Parmesan cheese were outstanding pairings with these entrees.

Teri insisted we try Melissa's desserts; glad we did. Piggly Wiggly White Chocolate Bread Pudding was outrageous (ask Teri about its origins), tropical Key Lime Pound Cake was quite summery, and the Chocolate Nutella Mousse pepped up with a shot of espresso aroused chocolate fantasies. This quaint haven is preparing outstanding food at reasonable prices. We are fortunate Teri migrated to delightful Decatur to live her dream.

FEAST, 314 East Howard Avenue, Decatur, Georgia 30030, (404) 377-2000

RESERVATIONS SUGGESTED

www.feastatlanta.com

LGBT FRIENDLY ***** (Charming)

FOOD ***** (Delicious)

PRICE ***** (Affordable)

AMBIENCE ***** (Cozy—Sit Outside if Mother Nature is Right)

DRINKS ***** (Great Martinis & Wine List)



JANELL ROCK, PERFORMER

by Xanna Don't

Janell Rock was not what her name connotes. Not musically. Her music was jazz with a creamy pop accessibility. But personally, she was everything her name implies; a breast cancer survivor for 13 years, she finally succumbed to it eight months ago. She was in the recording

studio just four days prior to her death working on a collection of songs for her second full length album. Unfinished, her longtime friend and fellow musician **Sue Palmer** took over the reins and completed ***Janell Rock, Performer*** with the co-production help of **Linda Morton**. Now available, Sue promises that no less than 50% of the purchase price of each CD will be donated to the Breast Cancer Fund, an entity that educates the public about contributing environmental factors and rallies for change. Sue has already made good on her promise: a record release party in San Diego that included blues legend **Candye Kane** already garnered over \$4,000 for the non-profit.

Janell's career began in her native Kansas as a piano club act. By moving to the west coast, she achieved honors that included winning Seattle's 8th Annual Lesbian Music Contest in 1992. Her composition, "Gertrude & Steins," about a women's bar, won Best Cabaret Song, an international industry award, in 2004. When she was in better health, she toured Japan and Sweden.

On this posthumous release, some of her songs take on the cancer issue directly. "I'm Gonna Be OK" opens with a rhythmic, whispered chant of the title that evolves into a dark but defiant melody reminiscent of Carole King's best work. "I Wonder What It's Like" genuinely ponders the afterlife with only fleeting flecks of justified anger. The lyrics mostly marvel at all the other impossible-to-answer questions of this world. It's fitting that Janell covers "Over The Rainbow" for her final collection. Like another special girl from Kansas once mused, "If happy little blue birds fly beyond the rainbow, why can't I?" Janell is soaring high above it now.

www.janellrock.com

scene

rough language poetry slam



happy hour at STEEL



the coaster

*now you can put your drink
down, back here... it's ok! ☺*

text message hell...

me (03/17, 8:12 pm) We're at the adele concert at variety playhouse and chris the former mp cop is working it. He left because they canned claire.

scott (03/17, 8:16 pm): As in to support her, or they let him go?

me (03/17, 8:25 pm): Hmm. Good clarifying question. He made it sound like he quit?

scott (03/17, 8:27 pm): Lol! I'm weasely like that.

me (03/17, 8:39 pm): I'm stupid honest. I just spill...!

sean (03/25, 12:08 pm): mo has bad strep throat and no health insurance and he is broke, what should scott and I do? Just asking for advice.

me (03/25, 12:11 pm): He'll have to wait a long time, but grady's emergency room can't refuse him...

ralph in alabama (03/27, 4:15 pm): So atlanta's gay film festival is back with the straight people who didn't want it & gave it up last year?

me (03/27, 4:21 pm): Yes, the unwanted foster child has been shuttled back again. ☹

*Forward your hellacious text messages to dontlabelit@gmail.com.
If you're lucky, maybe somebody will put a drink on it...!*