

MUD

LETTER

MAY 2023

*Pat*

We hold this space on the unceded  
land of the Kurna people.

We acknowledge them as the  
custodians of this wonderful place and  
will always try to do our work in solidarity  
with the anti-colonial struggle.

**ALWAYS WAS, ALWAYS WILL BE.**

We would like to thank, Tadhg, Jem, Jace and Emrah for  
their contributions to this month's publication.

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter and  
the MUD community, email [\*\*mudmusicart@gmail.com\*\*](mailto:mudmusicart@gmail.com)

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# WHAT WE DID WHEN EVERYTHING STOPPED

When the offer was extended to play a MUD Arts show we were stoked; what a cool idea and just the kind of format that nerds like us crave. And they run a Zine too? I love the shit out of all this and yet I found myself frozen and with no idea what I should write about. So I thought I'd catch you up on our last few years.

Adelaide is very dear to us. I think we toured there three times within the first 6 months of forming DEAD, maybe more. And at that time at least, it felt like there was so much coming out of the town musically. That was in 2011. We kept coming back as often as we could from then on.

At the beginning of 2020 we were gearing up to release a new album, tour nationally and in the US and celebrate 10 years of being a band. Then everything stopped. In a short space of time I canceled some 50 shows. That shit is heartbreaking when you put so much into them and when music is essentially what you've based your whole life around.

As a band we averaged 50+ shows a year and in 2020 we played one. That show was the last time we saw our friend Sean Baxter who died early on in the pandemic. Sean's impact on and support of our practice could not be overstated. Then we lost our friend Amy Briefs; an Adelaide native who helped us

out with shows there more than anyone and was always a delight and inspiration to watch behind the kit. There were more deaths and funerals were not possible - grieving was put on hold.

The sunshine seemed to go away.

It was impossible to predict the lockdowns and what restrictions they would bring with them. The novelty of isolation wore off. Every time a grant or government payment was announced it evaded us and it felt that artists were having confirmed the fact that we are scum in our society.

We felt determined to survive as a band and exploit what few positives could be found in this bizarre situation we found ourselves in. Bands began to delay their album releases and we could not see the point in doing that. April 1st 2020 we released Raving Drooling with no shows to support it and it sold better than any album we've released before or since. What a powerful showing of support from all that have followed us that was.

We started making music that could be performed and listened to whilst masked and socially distancing. We did 2 hour ambient noise sets outdoors. A few hours before one such show I got Covid. I didn't want to concede defeat so I gave Jace a recording of me making noise and told him to play along to it. Now he will always have played more DEAD shows than me!

We released a live album (UP/YOURS) as a tribute to Sean Baxter - through some fortune a friend had multitrack recorded the one show we'd played in 2020 and Sean's heckling voice was all over the recording. I'm glad we could do that. Putting it together was hard. "What would Sean do?" guided me at all times but it also felt so futile in that nothing could bring him back.

Somewhere in there we also finished a pop album we had started in 2019. But we couldn't bring ourselves to release it somehow.

And all our grief and angst was directed at a long form, instrumental work that would become known as The Laughing Shadow. I'm really proud of that one. The writing process, recording it, mixing it, putting together the artwork - it all felt very different. Once we'd finished recording it I told Jace I love this music so much but I don't know if I'll ever be able to play it live much - I just felt like crying when we played it. Mike Deslandes (yet another one of Adelaide's fine musicians) was the perfect person to record this album with. I'm so grateful we had him there with us.

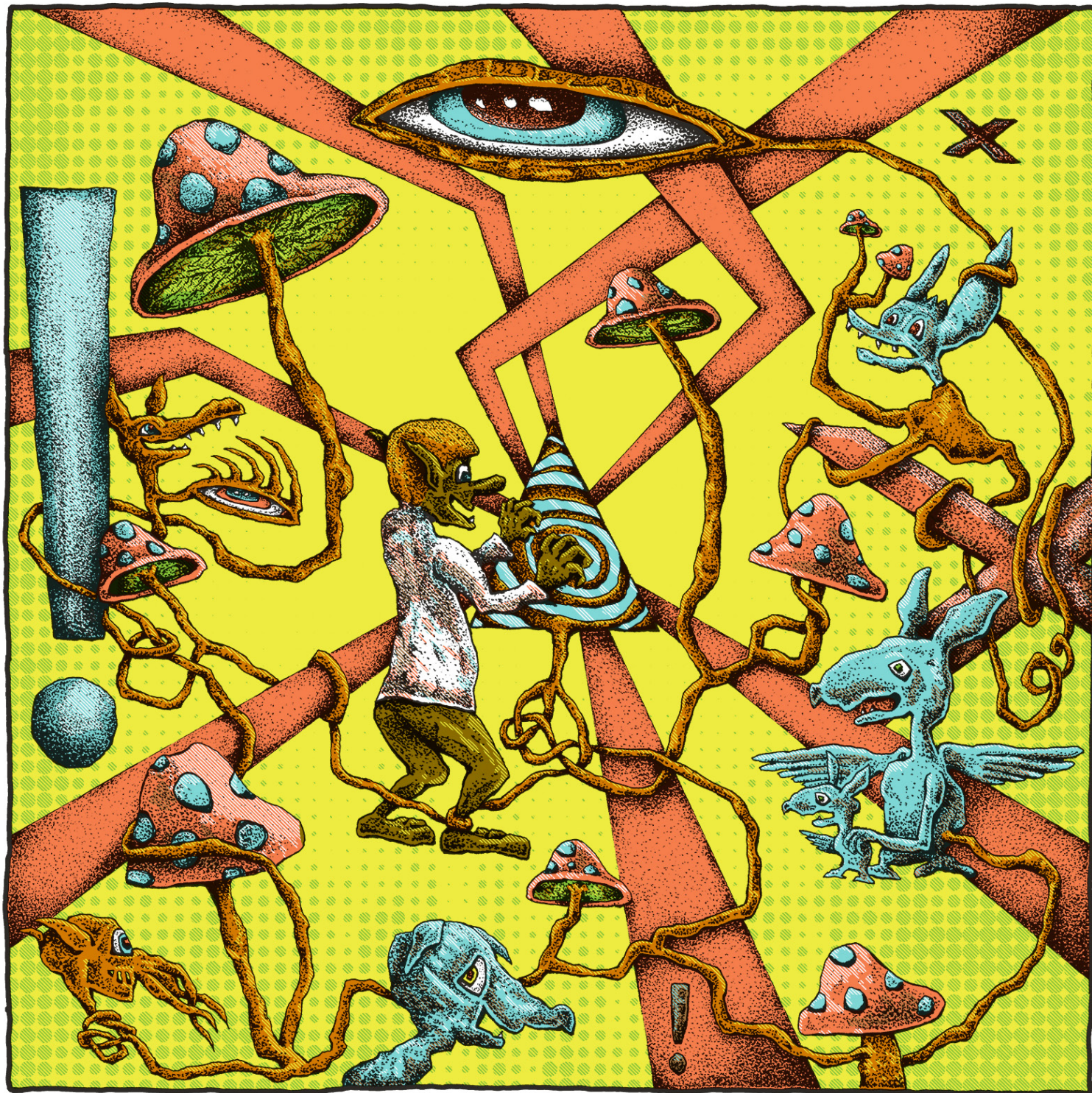
We added a third member to the band and wrote different material for that format. I grew up playing with Tommy and it's been such a treat to play with him again. We told him you're in the band but we will keep making music and touring as a two piece also. This way we never have to slow down because of anyone but ourselves.

And so we find ourselves with three distinctly different versions of the band. I realise how absurd this might seem but to us it's perfect. It's just the kind of self indulgent, over the top shit we love to see in other bands.

And I am so excited, even a little bit nervous to bring two versions of the band to Kaurna/Adelaide and play for MUD. Thanks for having us.

**- Jem**  
**DEAD - Drummer, record label operator**





Drawing by Jace (DEAD)  
Colouring by Simon Robins



# PAPER PORN

Having been a grain in the beach that is MUD, I've witnessed from within the forest of the fan, the rhythmic rocking of the baby, the running of the water, the delivery of its bringers milk, its compassionate bearing, desperate to give without receipt, altruistic.

From the first ever MUD LETTER in October of 2021 to the development of the website and other operational activities within the MUD framework up 'til this day, my time as MUD's in-house designer and as a friend of the Earth has been a tremendously generative period of growth for me as an individual, a professional, however most importantly to me, as a creative.

I've been gifted a wealth of experience and knowledge during this time. Experience and knowledge that has already been put into practice in so many ways in my creative, professional and personal life.

I've had an attraction to books, magazines and publications since I was a tiny guy. I've been irresistibly drawn to their tangibility. It's not necessarily just about the contents of the books, it's the essence of their physical form that captivates me. The colours, the imagery and the typography, all thought out and planned, ignite a fascination within me.

It's the touching of the pages, the revelling in the varying textures, from sheer to matte, to sealed gloss, a certain tactile pleasure is triggered that for me is somewhat indescribable, or if I'm healthily questioning myself at this moment, is something I'm avoiding describing at the fear of being somewhat turned on by it. Then there's the smell, that wafts from the pages as you crack them open. An olfactory slap to the face,

welcomed by many. That sweet pulpy, inked-out fragrance is unmistakable. It's as though it has a pheromonal quality to it, alluring the recipient of its aroma to open it up, to rustle through its leaves and dive in to be held by it, or, to contribute to it and form a deeply special bond. Make no mistake, an empty notebook is probably the most desirable of them all. Oh, the possibilities. Officeworks, my local porn dealer.

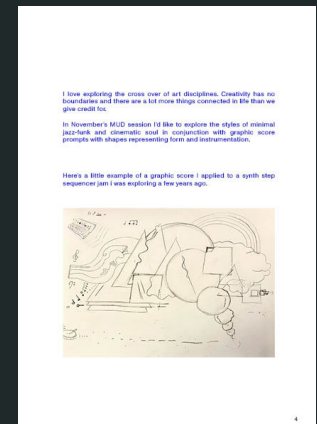
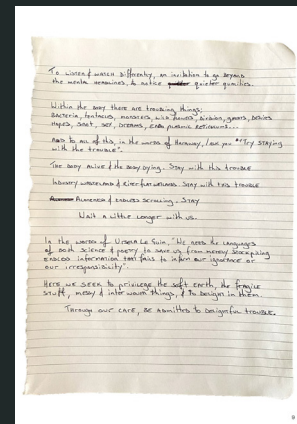
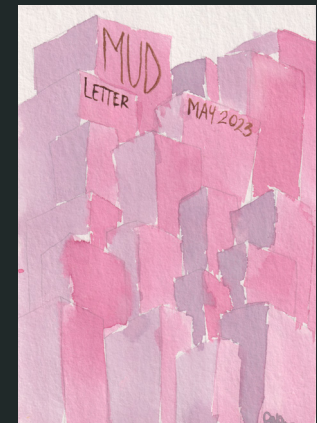
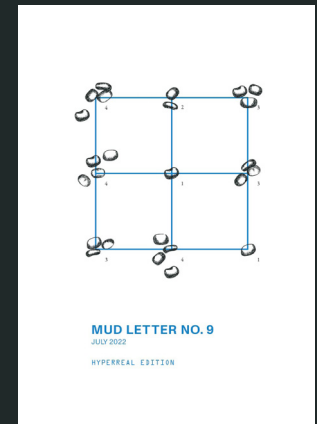
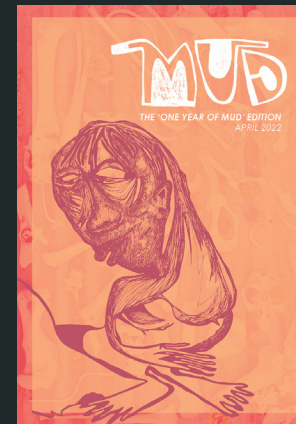
This moment in time, being the first where I've not only produced a publication design but contributed to it artistically and verbally, is something I'm immensely proud of. I am grateful for the opportunity to produce and present over fifteen publications for MUD over the years and I will surely look back to this time with fondness and great pride.

It's clear this thing, this mud, has been somewhat of a precursor, an alluvial silt steppe to stand and grow upon for many lovely humans over the last couple of years and what I hope will be many more to come. To all those who have been here, I hope you soaked it up as I have.

I'm excited to see what formations develop from the silt over the coming months and years. Kosta, Mungo and everybody who's been involved over the years, you should be very proud of yourselves, take a moment to soak in what you've achieved so far over a very short amount of time.

I see you, we see you and we love you, very much.

Thank you,  
Emrah



# KITCHEN SINK RADICALISM

Tadhg Porter-Cameron  
He/Him/They/Them

I went to a friends west-end sharehouse pretty recently for a few drinks, delirious after working a double Friday shift in hospitality on only three hours sleep, seeking to shed some or all of the intimately mental and physical exhausting working class labour that my profession entails.

I arrived at 10pm, after everyone had had dinner, but just in time for drinks and other more exciting refreshments. The company and conversation was decidedly politically minded; with a healthy side helping of artistic tangents, a bunch of white, mostly middle class identifying (let's be real though what even is the middle class), greenies, lefties, and hippies, and me, the lone eco-anarchist communist working class punk, and knowing half of the people there, and after becoming friendly with the other half, we began lurching towards debate on a number of left wing talking points and issues, with the environment and social justice as central focus, but also covering First Nations politics, how art and politics relate to one and other, the political nature of 90s rave culture, housing justice, and the strange, strange, culture of Port Lincoln, to name a few.

Within the four hours we spent there, in the dining room/kitchen of this house, enthralled by the quality of conversation and company around us to engage with, we, although sometimes coming at the same problem from different angles, could very easily find and agree on the same solutions, and/or have an engaging intellectual conversation. In my delirious work stressed state, I found myself in my element with dear friends, tearing apart the politics of the colony so we might understand what action we can most effectively engage in.

Strains of these conversations are repeating themes; I can recall with varying degrees of distinction at many different house gatherings and/or parties, be it at inner city sharehouses or further afield, at various reputable institutes of drink (dives, bars, and clubs), and camping, amongst hippies, punks, jocks, rave kids, normcore, at kitchen tables, sinks, sometimes on the floor, in beer gardens or other places one holds a beer, or sprawled across some outdoor area, the number of times that any number of political issues, (usually almost always given my choice of company and personal political opinions, from a left wing perspective) and amongst whomever it may have been, we have seemingly found the root of the issue, and in sensible order, proposed a very reasonable solution.

The truth is that it is the exact opposite of being this simple. Adelaide and Australia more generally is abundant when one goes looking with a vibrant and overlapping number of groups, formal and informal, be they political parties, activist groups, and/or a cute bunch of mates, who have talked their particular politics to death.

I'm not saying talking about politics is a bad thing: I would say the exact opposite, that talking about politics, engaging with various issues both intellectually and in real, tangible, physical and spiritual terms is a necessary set of skills for anyone who wants to cultivate an expanding political intelligence and understanding.

The point I am trying to make is that taking the next step towards action, towards organisation, towards building a more utopian society, is a different and complicated process of struggle, movements, and solidarity building, then any of these kitchen sink conversations and political debates ever will be.

## **STREET 19th April 2023**

Here we are, the proud children of the wretched  
Drinking and wanking ourselves to death  
On the wrong side of the world  
Living on streets built on blood and made of lies  
I am lost in between the concrete  
And the future I saw in your eyes  
How many eulogies will I write for how I used to be?  
I'm risen from the dead, again  
I live like I like it, I walk like I'm broken  
And I look both ways before giving up

## **YES TRESPASSING 17th May 2023**

We have stone age brains,  
Information age technology,  
And space age drugs  
And we are trapped  
In between the disappearing side walks,  
The nearest bus stop,  
And the next unwanted message.  
Looking for a world unseen,  
I am outside the stroad from my house to yours,  
Beyond every suburb and eyes glued to screens,  
Waiting for the notification that will set them free;  
I saw the signs that said "no trespassing"  
And figured it applied to no one ever,  
and, most especially, not to me

I am a Kurna land based musician, poet, street artist, conservationist, Anarchist Communist, and smart arse. I am interested in the artistic culture of our city, and how that city itself must be transformed to better cradle and support a thriving artistic culture accessible to all our comrades. My first and only mistress is the workers of the world.



