

Biting wit, offensive humor made into weapons by Hicks

By Carl Sundberg
Pulse Columnist

"Listen, the next revolution is gonna be a revolution of ideas. A bloodless revolution. And if I can take part in it by transforming my

FORGOTTEN ALBUMS

own consciousness, then someone else's, I'm happy to do it."

These are the words of a brilliant man. His name was Bill Hicks, and he was probably one of the funniest and intelligent comedians of our modern era.

Hicks was a comedic force that the world was simply not prepared for. His style was abrasive, his methods were chaotic and he scared the daylights out of the status quo. He shook people's belief structures right to the core.

He thought of himself as Shiva the Destroyer, the Buddhist god. Comedy was his weapon. His razor-sharp perception pinpointed and exposed both the worst and dumbest aspects of society. But his true genius was that he made everything hilarious.

His myriad of topics included savage routines on the news, pornogra-

phy, the first Bush administration, Operation Desert Storm, psychedelic drugs, the Pope, anti-abortion activists, patriotism, Rush Limbaugh and Jay Leno. He spit these topics at the audience like a cobra.

Sometimes his venomous comedy made people angry. Hecklers took their chances, but Hicks was well armed with intensely violent comebacks that would often send the heckler out of the room, whimpering like a child. Most often though, he left his crowd feeling enlightened.

Despite critical praise, raves from his peers (Sam Kinison being one of his friends) and a growing fan base, Hicks never really found widespread popularity during his short lifetime. A likely reason was his avid disgust for mainstream media outlets.

However, since his death in 1994 at the ripe young age of 32, his popularity has slowly increased. Now more people know of Bill Hicks, but chances are you have never actually heard his comedy.

Bill Hicks has six albums out: "Dangerous," "Relentless," "Arizona Bay," "Rant in E-Minor," "Live From Pittsburgh" and "Love Laughter and Truth." Each recording is unbelievable, but the disc that stands out as being one of the finest examples of

his style and humor is "Rant in E-Minor." The album is a virtually unknown comedic masterpiece.

It begins with "Fevered Egos," an eerie track in which Hicks says this will be his last performance. He then tells the audience about his mock television show called "Let's hunt and kill Billy Ray Cyrus." According to Hicks, he was just "trying to rid the world of all these fevered egos that are tainting our collective unconscious."

Around the midway point of the album, a piece called "You're Wrong Night" shows Hicks at his most offensive. What follows is a collage of his various confrontations with hecklers — intense, to say the least.

The album continues with voracious and biting humor all the way through. By the end of the album, you are either a converted Bill Hicks follower or hate him with a passion. Either way, you owe yourself a listen. If you pride challenging your thought and want some interesting ideas and philosophies to rejuvenate your mind and spirit, or if you just want to sit around and laugh until it hurts, give "Rant in E-Minor" a listen and hear for yourself the genius who is Bill Hicks.

Contact the Pulse columnist at carlsundberg@dailyemerald.com.



Eric Layton Illustrator

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