

A NIGHT in the life of STEVEN BENZ Punk Rocker



Steven Benz with X-Ray Cat at Vern's

Vern's Tavern was packed on a Thursday night in March when Calgary Punk band X-Ray Cat took the stage.

Ryan Robinson rocking out on drums. Marcus Wodrazka slapping the bass. Front man Steven Benz shredding on guitar. This combination of experienced punk rockers can even incite full on audience violence.

"The guy was just dancing around and stuff, its not like he was attacking her or something. I mean get a grip, the guy might be annoying you but why the hell would you smash a pint glass into someone's face and potentially ruin the night for everyone, the bands and the audience alike." Benz says in an interview regarding the fight that occurred March 29th during his band's set.

"Totally stupid, some people shouldn't drink without a straight jacket on." Benz says.

Fights are almost expected at punk shows but this evening things got pretty wild for no reason.

Benz is no noob to the punk scene either; he has been playing in bands for the past decade.



Marcus Wodrazka, Ryan Robinson, and Steven Benz as X-Ray Cat

"It all started when I was about 13 or 14. I had been playing guitar for a couple of years and started to see some local punk rock acts and I realized that that's what I wanted to do." Benz has performed with 5 bands including Calgary's beloved – and recently retired – The Pissoffs.

"I'm a custodian. It pays the rent and gives me free time at night to rock out." Benz, 23, is an Acting Team Leader for the crew at Mount Royal University. He's been setting up classrooms, banquet halls and dragging desks into the gymnasium for finals for four years now.

"I basically only work right now to be able to have a home, eat, drink, smoke cigarettes, and play music, and do the odd fun thing on the side." Although working as a custodian is not Benz's dream job it does allow him his nights off to do what he truly loves.

"My dream job would be to live off playing in my band, it's all I ever really wanted to do in my life, and it's the thing that makes me the most happy." Benz says, "Don't get me wrong, sometimes its really stressful if you take it seriously and the odds of success are always stacked up way against you, especially if you play in a band like mine!"

"If I was able to live off it, I would be a happy man. Not a rich one, but happy." Benz says.

The odds may be stacked against Benz and X-Ray Cat but that's not going to stop them from playing shows and making more albums.



Steven Benz, 23, guitarist for Punk Rock trio X-Ray Cat



Marcus Wodrazka and Steven Benz having some beers.

-Caitlin Clow