



Jesse (booking agent and tour manager)
jesse@cannonballstatman.com

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CANNONBALL STATMAN

Bio

Cannonball Statman is known for his soulful, playfully melancholic lyrics, his prolific musical output spanning numerous international tours, studio albums, and collaborations across a variety of artistic media and cultural movements, and his unique guitar style *Bob's Aural Delights* describes as "the edge of madness".

As noted in *amNewYork*'s 2023 [feature](#) on him: "Producing over a hundred songs and releasing over a dozen albums, Statman has made a name for himself in the music scene, sharing stages with Jeffrey Lewis, Days N' Daze, and Sunflower Bean."

In 2024, DJ Stephen Doyle [listed him](#) as one of the Top 15 New York Artists of all time.

[See Cannonball's recent videos](#) / [Hear Cannonball's 2024 self-titled album](#)

Selected Quotes (2020-'24)

"Instant classic! Album of the year by a mile!" (Stephen Doyle, Salford City Radio)

"under the radar work of genius" (Lou Terry in *Hard Of Hearing Magazine*)

"I urge you to listen to Cannonball's "Carlos Is On Fire" which coincidentally he has just released a new version of on his latest album." (Bob Osborne, *Different Noises*)

"...Statman charmed the entire greenhouse. Every now and then he jumped off the stage to make a U-turn after a few chords. The New Yorker also took over the Palmarium with his chatter in between, announcing his songs about the things of life. That's how we learned that Grow is about hair, and Tiger is about a tiger. But he also brought a song that is "a love song and a murder song at the same time" (I'm Gonna Explode), or a song about longevity that becomes exuberant. It was quite fun to enjoy the man's songs and honesty." (*daMusic*)

"Definitely the best album of the year for me. I've listened to it many, many times now, and I said it was the best album of the year after the first listen. It reminds me of primetime Neil Young, Sonic Youth, R.E.M., and loads of other stuff, but totally original as well, and it is the genius that is Cannonball/Jesse Statman...songwriting is absolutely top notch, the playing is brilliant...he's been on my radar for many years now, but every album just gets better and better...the lad's relatively obscure, but he should be absolutely massive." (Stephen Doyle, Salford City Radio)

"His numerous tours around the world have confirmed him as one of the masters of the genre ("The king of modern antifolk", according to *LiveTrigger Magazine*). And *Hard To Break* should be the album of consecration." (*Music In Belgium*)

"The only thing that's worked harder than Cannonball Statman after a year of zig-zagging the UK and Europe on tour are his guitar strings. His 31st album demonstrates his irrepressible energy and his wit and personality shine throughout." (*Humming in the Din*, Best of 2023)

"One of the most theatrical and energetic live musicians New York City has ever produced." (*Associação Terapêutica do Ruído*)

"Imbued with freedom" (Rémy Trouches in *La Depeche*)

"One of my most beautiful surprises of this autumn 2023 was entering a Parisian bookstore on a rainy evening and finding much better than a good novel: France de Griessen, Cannonball Statman and their guitars. Captivated by their presence, and bewitched by their poetry, my next encounter with them and their music will not be by chance; I look forward to a future tour of theirs that will bring them near my home." (Simon Baril, author of *Bleu guitare*)

"New York folk-punk legend" (*Medina Bookshop*)

MORE ON THE 2024 RELEASE OF CANNONBALL STATMAN'S SELF-TITLED ALBUM

Following over 20 years of recording and performing his original music, 2024 sees the long-awaited release of the romantic punk artist Cannonball Statman's self-titled 32nd album, an album made in part with the intention of uniting the fans of Cannonball's live work with the fans of his recorded work, who've long existed as two distinct, separate groups due to the significant aesthetic and thematic differences between his albums and live performances.

While his previous 31 albums were conceptualized and presented as "movies without pictures" – each telling its own story with its own aesthetic that varies wildly from album to album and is vastly different from what he does on stage – the purpose of this one is to tell the story of what a Cannonball Statman performance is actually like, to capture something of the experience many gig-goers have had seeing Cannonball perform over the years.

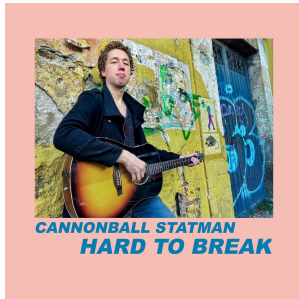
As such, sprinkled throughout the album are a number of elements seldom heard on a Cannonball Statman album but widely known to be a feature of his live outings, including his signature brand of sometimes funny, sometimes serious, always absurd and witty "stream-of-consciousness" banter he refined in his teens and 20s as a prolific performer in both the New York underground scenes and the international touring circuits of the 2010s.

And in addition to previously unreleased songs such as "East Broadway" and "Tom Turkey", the album features new acoustic arrangements of songs from throughout the earlier years of Cannonball's career, with re-imaginings of classics such as "Rockport, ME" from 2016's *Hummingcone*, "Tiger" from 2014's *Icepick*, and a stripped-down rendition of "Henry Hudson" from 2017's *Playing Dead* that was also included in *Killing The Flowers Will Not Delay Spring*, a benefit compilation by queer New York artists for the Freedom Theatre in Jenin.

The album is also noteworthy for its political messaging being more overt and direct than in Cannonball's previous work, including the anti-imperialist battle cry "Ghosts! (We Have Always Been At War)" that became a staple of Cannonball's live outings after the escalations of the ongoing Nakba in October 2023 brought these themes to the surface of the collective consciousness. Additionally, the tender and heart-wrenching new recording of "The Morgue" reflects Cannonball's continued advocacy for mental health rights, to which references can also be found throughout his discography, inspired by his personal experiences as a survivor of psychiatric abuse and his decades-long journey in healing from that trauma.

In addition to the return of producer Ben Turner and a number of the guest musicians who had previously played wind instruments on Cannonball's 2023 album *Hard to Break*, some of the more diehard fans will find yet another familiar name in the credits – the Belgian-Dutch romantic punk artist France de Griessen. France's vocal and instrumental contributions to this album mark the first time these two have worked together on an album, following numerous live duets in the UK and Europe. A recent European tour of theirs drew the attention of famed French photographer Renaud Monfourny, who photographed the two in romantic punk attire for the photoblog of *Les Inrockuptibles*, describing their connection as a "beautiful musical friendship".

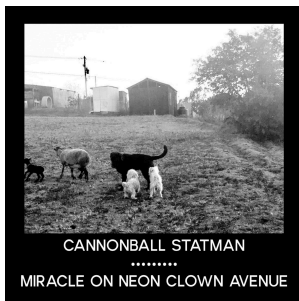
Additional Recent Releases



2023 - *Hard to Break*

11 track album of indie art rock songs about coming back to life after a long hiatus. Recorded in 2022 at Axe & Trap Studios in Wells. Additional recording in Oaxaca, Mexico and Buenos Aires, Argentina. Produced by Ben Turner. Mastered by Peter Fletcher at Black Bay Studio in Scotland.

[BandCamp](#) / [Spotify](#)



2022 - *Miracle on Neon Clown Avenue*

18 track double album of experimental rock and acoustic punk songs inspired by Cannonball's struggles with suicidality and dreams of outer space. Recorded in 2019 at The Rattle in London. Produced by Ben Turner and Gem. Mastered by Peter Fletcher at Black Bay Studio in Scotland.

[BandCamp](#) / [Spotify](#)



2019 - *Rhinoceros Crossing*

8 track album of lo-fi, self-produced acoustic songs about letting go of a previous way of being. Recorded in 2019 in Oaxaca, Mexico, shortly after *Miracle on Neon Clown Avenue*.

[BandCamp](#) / [Spotify](#)



2019 - *Interdimensional Ice Cream Cake*

4 track EP of rock and roll songs commissioned by Auden Lincoln-Vogel and Estonian Academy of the Arts for use in the award-winning short film Zorg 2. Recorded in 2018 at The Rattle in London. Produced by Gem.

[BandCamp](#) / [Spotify](#)

Selected Quotes (2012-'19)

"the punkest motherfucker that I've seen in a long time." (Somer Bingham of *The Real L Word*)

"You can't fuck with this kid. He puts modern "punk" acts to shame. Very aggressive folk music. This is like acoustic Dead Kennedys. He sounds like he is about to snap and he barks like a dog. I think there is something wrong with him...in the best way possible." (Crazy & the Brains frontman Chris Urban in *PunkNews*)

"You have never seen anything like Cannonball Statman on stage. I have seen a lot, a whole lot, and never have I witnessed anything like him. Buy the record, come to his shows. He might be coming to a town near you, leaving your inner landscape changed forever." (Stu "Chickenleg" Richards)

"For starters, Cannonball Statman (who made it in our latest Best of NYC Poll for Emerging Artists) has got the look - with an over-sized afro of curly red hair and a commanding stage presence. The music delivers the acoustic punk attack of antifolk by way of black metal; it's not unusual for a typical 5-minute song to run the BPM gamut and contain several distinct sections. Lyrically, he embraces smorgasbord surrealism, but the songs always resonate and the audience is never distanced from the youthful anxieties and aspiration that fuel his fervor." (*The Deli Magazine*)

"Jesse "Cannonball" Statman met the challenge. With his great mop of curly hair surging as he head-banged and ripped into his guitar, Statman was a bristling ball of energy. Marrying his grunge folk attack to an earnest, off-kilter manner that recalled Jonathan Richman, Statman introduced absurdist songs about being half man-half-black-Labrador-retriever, and spying for the French government by swimming the English channel with entertaining, non-sequitur explanations." (*Creative Loafing*)

"Cannonball Statman is so unbelievably great. At songwriting, at performing and at spreading freeing thoughts so charmingly, you want to cry. And he's shredding the hell out of his guitar!" (Bernhard Karakoulakis, founder of the German antifolk label Lousy Moon Records)

"Cannonball Statman comes from Brooklyn, New York and delivers a unique blend of speed of light vocalising with an amazing guitar technique which varies between scratchy antifolk and stunning sonic dexterity. His songs are intense, oblique, and teetering on the edge of madness. The stand-out track "Carlos Is On Fire (and Alicia Doesn't Know)" is five minutes of complex word play which feels like something Paul Auster would have written in the New York Trilogy. One of the best, and most unique, sets of music I have heard all year." (*Bob's Aural Delights*)

"Jonathan Richman on speed" (JD Meatyard)

"Brilliant lyricist" (Average Joey)

Selected Career Highlights (2020-'25)

2025 - Featured as a guest vocalist and songwriter on *Do Me Dirty* by Ben Eales, and directed the short film *Blue Snow* starring France de Griessen, which premiered at Cinéma du Panthéon in Paris in December - [more on the short film](#), [more on the Ben Eales album](#)

2024 - Recorded and released his self-titled 32nd album, with producer Ben Turner documenting the energy and experience of the live acoustic performances that Cannonball had long been known for among avid underground gig-goers, now presenting his work to the broader public in a new way - [link](#)

June 2024 - A new recording of Cannonball's song "Henry Hudson" was released as part of *Killing The Flowers Will Not Delay Spring*, a benefit compilation by queer New York artists for The Freedom Theatre in Jenin - [link](#)

Spring 2024 - Embarked on the Romantic Punk Spring 2024 French Tour with France de Griessen, including performances in Paris and the South of France, and a photoshoot at the Belgian Embassy in Paris by photographer Renaud Monfourny that was featured on the photo blog of *Les Inrockuptibles*: [photo from Les Inrocks blog](#), [concert review in La Depeche](#)

October 2023 - Released his 31st album *Hard to Break*, which was called "album of the year" by UK radio DJ Stephen Doyle, with Lou Terry listing the title track as his Song of the Year in *Hard of Hearing Magazine*; the album received radio play around the world including local and national stations in the US, the UK, France, and Catalonia, and its release was followed by a 7-week UK/EU tour spanning 9 countries, including dates with Jason Trachtenburg, France de Griessen, JD Meatyard, and Cowtown, and a performance at the London Antifolk Festival - [amNewYork feature](#), [Music In Belgium write-up](#), [Island Echo write-up](#), [Hard of Hearing Magazine piece](#), [Radio Reverb interview](#)

September 2023 - Reunited with long-time collaborator and touring partner Mallory Feuer of The Grasping Straws and Jeffrey Lewis & the Voltage for a 1-week UK tour to coincide with the recent Cannonball Statman music video releases and the new Grasping Straws EP *Patterns* - [video](#), [tour press](#)

August 2023 - Released music videos for "Hard to Break" and "F Train Over Brooklyn" directed by Dylan Mars Greenberg and Preston Spurlock, with release parties at historic NYC venue Millennium Film Workshop.

2023 - Performed at events in the UK and mainland Europe connected with compassionate and humanizing approaches to mental health treatment and survivors of psychiatric abuse, inspired by his numerous personal experiences as a survivor of psychiatric abuse in both the US and Mexico during his childhood, adolescence, and 20s, now sharing his story with the public for the first time.

August 2022 - Released the double album *Miracle on Neon Clown Avenue*, and did a UK/EU tour for it the following Spring, including a concert with Jeffrey Lewis & the Voltage - [album write-up](#), [tour documentary](#), [tour radio interview](#), [tour press](#), [post-tour interview](#)

2020-'22 - Wrote and recorded *Hard to Break* in the UK and Mexico.

Selected Career Highlights (2012-'19)

2016-'19 - Made a living as a full-time internationally touring solo artist on a 3-year world tour, with hundreds of dates in North America and Europe including fundraisers for Food Not Bombs and anti-racist groups and dates with influential Belgian band The Shovels and California lo-fi band The Blank Tapes, and Asian dates including with iconoclastic star Joanna Wang and award-winning Taiwanese band Outlet Drift - [blog interview](#), [write-up](#), [radio interview](#), [videos from the world tour](#)

2018 - Commissioned by Auden Lincoln-Vogel and Estonian Academy of Arts to write and record *Interdimensional Ice Cream Cake*, a series of songs made for and inspired by Lincoln-Vogel's award-winning short film *Zorg 2*.

December 2017 - Released *Playing Dead* on Salford, UK label German Shepherd Records during the 3-month Taiwanese leg of his world tour - [review](#), [release party video](#)

July 2016 - First tour in mainland Europe, with The Grasping Straws - [videos from the tour](#)

2015 - Made Crazy & the Brains frontman Chris Urban's Best of 2015 list in *PunkNews* with *Shriekofafreak!* - [write-up](#)

October 2015 - First UK tour, with the John Peel favourite JD Meatyard - [write-up](#)

March 2015 - Supported Current Joys at Palisades in NYC - [write-up](#)

March 2014 - Collaborated with Jeffrey Lewis on a cover of "Lady Godiva's Operation" by The Velvet Underground - [video](#)

2014 - Voted one of NYC's Best Emerging Artists by readers of *The Deli Magazine* - [link](#)

February 2014 - Photographed and written up as part of a *New York Times* feature on prominent performers in the NYC open mic scene, also including Dylan Mars Greenberg - [link](#)

December 2013 - First USA tour, with Phoebe Novak - [split EP](#), [NC gig write-up](#)

2013-'15 - Became closely involved with a new wave of artists in NYC's antifolk movement that was emerging at the time, performing with both established and up-and-coming artists such as Sunflower Bean, Pinc Lounds, Matthew Silver, Days N' Daze, Brook Pridemore, David Peel, Jeffrey Lewis, The Grasping Straws, Jason Trachtenburg, The Pizza Underground, Crazy & the Brains, Teenage Halloween, Shilpa Ray, *Real L Word* star Somer Bingham, Will Wood, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee Ricky Byrd, and members of The Moldy Peaches. In addition to [his own performances](#), he presented the annual *Cannonballfest!* and monthly *Cannonball Presents* events in NYC, and [covered the local scene](#) as music editor for *Boog City*. Though regarded as the "king" of the 2010s wave of antifolk due to his close connection with this scene before he left NYC, today Cannonball is more known for his collaborations with European and Latin American artists, and his musical style that is more associated with romantic punk.

2012 - Changed his performance name to the name of his childhood dog, Cannonball Statman, after a bizarre hand injury significantly changed his songwriting and guitar style. Collaborated with the late hip hop pioneer Kid Lucky ([video](#)) and Ghanaian soul artist Ria Boss ([video](#)).

Selected Career Highlights (2000-'11)

2011 - Graduated from high school, and began to perform live on a more frequent basis, starting with a packed concert at Perch Cafe in Brooklyn with performance poet Jane LeCroy, and an appearance at the First Annual Hudson Music Festival.

2010 - Wrote his 100th song.

2009-'10 - Began a prolific phase of writing and recording songs in his bedroom while attending high school and living with his parents in their Brooklyn apartment. These songs were only released to the public many years later, on Cannonball Statman albums such as *Transformation in the 24 Hour Deli*, *Life on a Landlocked Island*, *More Than The Nightmare Station*, and *Trips*.

2008-'10 - Wrote and directed a film called *The Manual Polar Goes For A Ride* that takes place in a possible future where Brooklyn, New York has been held under siege for generations by a mysterious entity, and a group of mutated young people try to escape. This film was originally only screened and distributed locally within NYC, but was later released online by a collector of Cannonball's early work, inspiring Cannonball to also release it on his own site - [link](#)

2009 - Became a published poet with his poem "Vaseline" in *Hanging Loose Magazine* #95. Later works were published in *Eleven and a Half Journal*, and he went on to give readings of his poetry at venues around the world, including NYC's legendary Bowery Poetry Club in 2012 and Paris's Librairie La 25e Heure in 2023. He has continued to write poems prolifically, and often sets them to music, as heard on the tracks "Helsinki, 1993" and "Sunrise: Where's Ace?" from the albums *Hard to Break* (2023) and *Miracle on Neon Clown Avenue* (2022), respectively.

2006-'11 - Worked as a photographer in analog and digital formats, assembling a portfolio and multiple photography series, including *Infinity (and other inventions)* (2006-'11) and *Origin of the Black Squirrel* (2009), and creating his own photography and poetry zines including *Stranger Dreams* (2010-'11). Photographs from the *Infinity (and other inventions)* series can also be found in the artwork for *Transformation in the 24 Hour Deli*, *Trips*, and other releases.

2002-'17 - Was a prolific writer, director, and editor of experimental, low-budget short films and music videos in collaboration with various co-writers, co-directors, co-editors, animators, actors, and crew members in NYC, amassing a filmography of over 100 shorts and music videos at the time, some of which are still available online - [selected filmography](#)

2004 - Finished post-production on his debut short film *The Scarf*, a surrealist anti-war film co-starring and co-directed with Band Of The Land bandmate Beth Heuer that was released as a now out of print DVD in the underground scene in NYC that year, and was later released for viewing online - [link](#)

2002-'03 - Was a guitarist, songwriter, and vocalist in Caution Tape, with members of [Fiasco](#).

2002 - Began writing, recording, and performing music and learning to play guitar and sing, forming [The Band Of The Land](#) with percussionist and singer Beth Heuer. Released early cassettes on the underground scene in NYC. Started production on short film *The Scarf*.

2000-'01 - Collaborated with his grandpa, the poet [Kenneth Koch](#), on a series of poetry comics, shortly before Kenneth's death. A selection of the comics they made together was presented at Tibor de Nagy Gallery in 2004 alongside pages from *The Art of the Possible!* - [link](#)

Tech rider for solo performances

Cannonball's solo performances are done with one acoustic-electric guitar and vocals. For amplified solo performances, he only requires a vocal mic and stand, a PA system, and something to plug his guitar cable into.

He often has merchandise with him on tour, and likes for there to be a table to set up his merchandise, preferably near a power outlet or a light so the merchandise can be well-lit and visible if the space is dark.

Hospitality

Cannonball normally travels alone when he tours as a solo artist, unless he has additional artists on the road with him. He is allergic to shellfish, raw carrots, and some cats. He doesn't drink alcohol or do any drugs (except for caffeine). He likes to have at least one cup of coffee in the morning, black, with no sugar, either a double espresso or an americano.



Photos by France de Griessen and Aidan Watson