



Sonic Bastards

Shanghai, Harley's Bar, 21st March 2005.

Using the chance to get a view of a foreign band about the Chinese music scene, Max-Leonhard von Schaper (Azchael) interviewed the band Sonic Bastards before their gig in the Harley's Bar in Shanghai for Rock in China. After a short exchange of introduction material and a quick chat to get to know each other, the actual interview began:



MLvS: Let's start with the most obvious questions: Why is an Austrian punk band touring in China? What is the story behind?

Sonic Bastards: Well, in the beginning we'd been planning to organize a tour through Germany and asked our manager to arrange it. But then we found the Wuhanpunk webpage in the internet, through which we came in contact with Mai Dian, who immediately suggested us to replace the Germany tour with a tour through the communistic country of China. He proposed to organize everything for us, so we couldn't say no.

MLvS: What were the reactions in Austria after you announced your China tour plans?

Sonic Bastards: Our band Sonic Bastards do exist for more than 7 years. We're living our lives only for the music and we're doing it because it's fun. And we've worked very very hard to win our present fan audience in Austria. Just before we left Austria for China we've suddenly gained media attendance, but only as "an Austrian band touring in China", not as "Sonic Bastards in China". You see, in which way the Austrian press is thinking about us.

MLvS: What is your general impression of China and the local punk-/music scene? What have you liked here?

Sonic Bastards: We like China, everything works really smoothly here. It has a very good organization, a very good networking and a good cooperation between the punks from different cities.

MLvS: How many people have you played in front of so far?

Sonic Bastards: Every figure between 150 and 600. Starting from a small bar event up to a big festival in Chengdu (Art Festival - 8 years Little Bar). Photo below taken by Greenwall (Cai Ming : [Homepage](#)).



MLvS: In which cities was the audience the most crazy one?

Sonic Bastards: In two cities: First, in Zhengzhou, where it was a party one-of-a-kind. Everybody had a good time and enjoyed himself. No problems, no negative aggressions and everybody enjoyed the music as it was. And second, Wuhan, just a perfect concert with wonderful support bands.

MLvS: What has impressed you most? Which things happened to which you can say that you are positively surprised?

Sonic Bastards: We're highly impressed by the local police! We arrived expecting to run into trouble with them and that there would be some kind of censorship. Please don't forget, VIALKA was thrown out of the country after their tour. But we were surprised: The opposite happened: Everything was fairly easy and the police helped us a lot during the tour.

MLvS: Did something unusual happen to you on the tour?

Sonic Bastards: The strangest thing that happened was the visit by an elder Japanese business man, dressed in a corporate suit, who entered the backstage room in Wuhan, put his business card on the table and left without saying a word. We thought "What the f...", but after checking



the business card, we were impressed: He was from People's Records (Japan) and we're definitely are going to contact him after finishing the tour.

MLvS: Could you shortly describe, in how far the Austrian and the Chinese punk scene's are different?

Sonic Bastards: Well, first, the cooperation between the punks is light years away of what we are familiar with in Austria. Second, there are no trend followers here, but only people who are really interested in the music. If 150 people come to a concert, then 150 people are there because of the music and not because it's "another concert" (exception: Beijing). Then, there are no beggar punks, those who only drink, trouble old people on the street and destroy public property and stuff like that. Actually the people are more punk in China than in Austria and they are a lot more thankful and grateful. That's a feeling you can only get here in China. The people only want to have fun and make a party, but do not have aggressions with each other.

MLvS: And had there been any bad impressions?

Sonic Bastards: Certainly there had been a few things: The trains were full of control-maniacs who shouted like hell and tried to sell useless things. That really annoyed us. Then, as expected, everything is dirtier than in Austria, but we got used to it quite fast. In one city there was a sound technician, who really believed that the monitor sound speakers had to be turned towards the audience and he insisted on having a "free corridor with no people" between him and the stage... And the last thing about accommodation in Beijing: It was dirty when we arrived, but it was only cleaned after we left...



MLvS: Thanks for the interview!

Sonic Bastards, 3 people plus one Journalist for the Austrian Magazine "Fleisch" (Meat)

Remarks: SB have immediately bought the "Chuck Schuldiner" Tribute "Unforgotten Past" and are supporting the upcoming "Dimebag Darrel Tribute" and wish Chinese underground scene the best for the future!