



# Ben Franklin - Optimist

"Imagine Cheap Trick jamming with early Black Flag at Dismemberment Plan's 4th of July BBQ"

- Jim Testa, Jersey City Independent / Jerseybeat

## Songs

1. Tell Us How You Really Feel (4:14)\*
2. Drink to Forget - (3:51)
3. Ghosts - (3:06)
4. Montclair - (2:36)
5. The Face of Proposition 8 - (2:45)
6. Catalyst - (4:30)\*
7. Credit Default Swap Bop - (1:45)\*
8. Timmeh - (4:15)\*
9. Had It Comin' - (4:17)
10. You Is Me - (3:04)
11. Fren Banklin - (3:31)

\* explicit lyrics

## Recommended Tracks

1\*, 2, 4, 9, 11

## RIYL

Fugazi, Pixies, Dismemberment Plan, Spoon, Guided By Voices, Weezer, The Rolling Stones

## Members

Eddie Garcia Garza - bass  
Billy Gray - guitar  
Sarah Tomek - drums

## Contact

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## Released Sept 3rd, 2009

**Ben Franklin** is a new DIY group, formed by three old hands in the NY/NJ indie rock scene. Guitarist Billy Gray comes from North NJ's now defunct post-punk group The Meltdowns, bassist Eddie Garza hails from Brooklyn's Imperialists and L.A.'s The OAOTs, and drummer Sarah Tomek is an award-winning session drummer from Asbury Park and the Brooklyn-based art-rock band Cavalier Rose.

The band was originally formed to help fill-in a few shows, and called "Ben Franklin Was a Whoremonger and God Bless Him." In December of 2008, Eddie and Billy started writing a lot of personal and political material together and decided to chop the name down and start a new project, writing a new record that would become *Optimist*.

Over the course of the winter they recruited Sarah to get behind the kit, the drummer of Billy's first band, many years ago. The immediate result was an explosion of hyperactive energy, wry humor, and pounding rock. Throughout the course of the year the band gained a reputation for putting on a thunderbolt of a live show that usually ends in no small amount of mayhem.

In May of 2009, the group enlisted Daniel Schlett (who recorded A Place to Bury Strangers, The Roadside Graves) to record and mix their debut album at Hoboken's Hudson County Pigeon Club. In September the full-length was released to a full room of eager fans at Pianos in the Lower East Side. Generating some glowing reviews and local airplay (WBJB, WRSU, 105.7 The Hawk), they're poised to make an impact on the indie rock scene. The record moves from vicious and visceral punk rock to sober and melancholy bar crawlers. For a trio that tracked all the instruments live, the record has a remarkably non-stop and full sound, from the slow and sweet numbers to the slash-and-burn shouting matches.

Filthy bars, sweaty basements, and the oddest of performance spaces await Ben Franklin, as do many friends and fans. The band will be taking short tours on the East coast in 2010 to promote *Optimist* and build up their audience while they write for their next record. *Optimist* is now in its second printing.

## Bands We've Played With

Thomas Francis Takes His Chances

Brook Pridemore

¡No Pasaran!

The Press

The Nightlights

Bern & The Brights

Kagero

The Invincible Gods

The Courtesy Tier

Yonni Gordon and the Goods

Dead Stars

Frozen Gentlemen

The Amboys

Una Pong

Skull Motion

Sounds of the American Doomsday Cult

The McMickle Brothers

Victor Bravo

## Press Clippings

That night I got back home at 4am. There was the LP just sitting innocently where I left it. Exhausted from the night's event I figured I'd toss it in while I slept. That was the plan anyway. I didn't get a wink of sleep before I was rocking out! - [Zac Clark, NJ.com, Sept 15 2009](#)

The trio rocks like a quintet, mixing throbbing, melodic basslines, slashing guitar leads interspersed with head-bouncing riffage, and driving backbeats, melding a hectic fusion of pop, punk, and funk — imagine Cheap Trick jamming with early Black Flag at Dismemberment Plan's 4th of July BBQ. - [Jim Testa, JC Independent, Aug 13 2009](#)

With a mixed bag ranging of epic rock themes to small human stories to political statements, the neopunk band Ben Franklin rocked the house of Brooklyn's Club Europa. The set started off with, "The Face of Proposition 8," a hard, in-your-face, reload the arsenal jam that encompasses what this band's all about: hard rock and liberal politics. - [Vandal Truong, Knocks, Jun 9 2009](#)

## Performances

### 2010

May 30 - WE Fest - Wilmington, NC

May 14 - Maxwell's - Hoboken, NJ

Mar 13 - Asbury Lanes - Asbury Park, NJ

Mar 12 - Matchless - Brooklyn, NY

Mar 5 - The Delancey - NYC

Feb 19 - Kearny Irish American Club - Kearny, NJ

### 2009

Dec 16 - Asbury Lanes - Asbury Park, NJ

Dec 5 - Heaven (house) - East Brunswick, NJ

Nov 13 - The Studio @ Webster Hall - NYC

Nov 12 - Lit Lounge - NYC

Nov 10 - Wonder Bar - Asbury Park, NJ

Oct 25 - The Delancey - NYC

Sep 16 - Public Assembly - Brooklyn, NY

Sep 3 - Pianos - NYC (record release)

Sep 1 - Wonder Bar - Asbury Park, NJ

Aug 29 - Eisenhower Loft - Brooklyn, NY

Aug 12 - Groove on Grove - Jersey City, NJ

Aug 1 - Automata Chino - Jersey City, NJ

July 24 - Matchless - Brooklyn, NY

July 17 - John & Peter's - New Hope, PA

June 19 - Boro 6 Indie Music Fest - Montclair, NJ

June 4 - Europa - Brooklyn, NY

May 16 - Automata Chino - Jersey City, NJ

Feb 22 - Cake Shop - NYC