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## NIL8 Returns: A Quarter Century of Punk Rock



After a long absence, NIL8 returns Saturday, April 18 to the Hangar 9. Locals the Copyrights and Sci

Leah Williams

### Bands

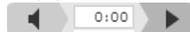
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Who: NIL8 / Copyrights / Scifilands

What: punk showcase

Where:

When: 2015-04-18

*After a long absence, NIL8 returns Saturday, April 18 to the Hangar 9. Locals the Copyrights and Scifilands will warm up.*

*The amped-up foursome from Springfield is celebrating more than twenty-five years of making music. Debuting in 1989, NIL8 tore up the region with raw, punk-pure energy, and that year, the band released their first seven-inch vinyl record, "Last Flash of Paisley Pastel" and "Too Loud." The followup, Six Inch Extension, came out in 1991, and a couple of years later, the guys signed with Fundamental Records. From there, NIL8 was immersed in the nineties punk-rock scene, performing intense live shows and filling releases with socially conscious songs.*

*Nightlife recently swapped emails with NIL8 founder Jeff Williams. Read on to find out how Williams feels about making music with his high-school band three decades later and his favorite memories of the Blue Meanies. He also had much to say about love for old technologies and unfortunate cussing fits in front of family.*

*When you first began playing with NIL8, did you think you would still be playing today?*

*What? Are you kidding? When I was eighteen and we first started playing, there was no way I thought I would live to thirty, let alone forty or fifty! And now I have been on planet earth for*

*five decades. I'm still in the only band I have ever really been in! The other guys in the band— Damon Soper, Wes Selinger, and my brother Bruce Williams— all play in other bands. The Timmys and Mag have actually both played with us in the old Hangar. But to be around playing the style of music we have played for this long is pretty unbelievable if I try to look at it from the outside. It's pretty normal to me since I have lived it, I suppose.*

*What are some of your favorite memories with the band?*

*Touring with the Blue Meanies, who were our label mates on Chicago-based Fuse Records and who formed in Carbondale. Those were great tours! We got along really well. They had a million people in their band. We could barely make it touring North American through most of the nineties and we were a four-piece. Heck the Meanies had a four-piece horn and organ section.... almost! Good*

thing we liked peanut butter and jelly sandwiches!

We would tour the South and West Coast and Colorado ski-resort towns in the winter. Then East Coast or upper Midwest in summers.

Oh, another really fun tour was opening for Mindless Self Indulgence! That was great!

Of course the first shows you play with a band like that, a band with really loyal fans, you have to not mess about as an opener. We saw a band get destroyed but the crowd. Well, it was because the singer of this other band got too big for his very own britches and tore his shirt off on song number one of their set, tried to do a couple of Iggy Pop moves and tried to emulate that Strokes persona. Oh, the crowd caught on and felt he was being fake, and oh my god, they were ruthless. Booing the literal beep out of them. *We were spooked!* We thought we were doomed for sure. I think the crowd was being super nice to us, but we had great shows opening for [Mindless Self Indulgence].

The Vandals and Millions of Dead Cops were other bands we had fun touring with. We also played with Uncle Tupelo— members of Wilco and Son Volt— the Specials, Flaming Lips, AFI, Avail, the Jesus Lizard, L7, Less Than Jake, Smashing Pumpkins, Fear. So many. Played the *Rock Against Reagan* tour with Millions of Dead Cops at the old Illinois state capitol, and yes, there was a police... presence, oops.

*What is it like working with your brother?*

I love being in a band with my brother! When we used to tour full-time, I know there were times we wanted to strangle the other band members, but that's just from being in the back of a short bus with no air conditioning for month at a time, tour after tour. Once I flipped out in the Rockies on way to Seattle. I ended up covering myself in ketchup packets. My brother just ignored it and continued resting. I looked like I'd been through the ringer, but he was unfazed by my melodramatics by that point of touring!

*What do you hope someone gets from attending a NIL8 show?*

Well, I know I *don't* want anyone getting hepatitis, but mostly I want to see people having fun, maybe come up and sing part of a song if I ask them to. Also, if my mama happens to come to Carbondale and makes it into the show, *please* warn me! My mom always seems to appear out of nowhere when I am having my biggest cuss fits! It's terrible. I try not to talk filthy, but some times I get egged on. It sucks.

*How has the industry changed since you first started playing?*

Well, it's nice to have music available for people to hear easily, like Spotify or even Youtube vids, though I still like cassettes and vinyl— just something about those old technologies that I still like.

*Do you have any plans to record anytime soon?*

Well, I wrote a song called “Twyla, why did you take my oops baby/You know that child's half mine.” Yeah, we need to record that song for sure! I have been working on paintings for art shows [the] last few years, so we don't get to play as much as we used to. But it makes me appreciate the moments when we do play. I enjoy them that much more!

*Is there anything else you would like to add?*

I am quite sure I have blathered enough. See you son of a bucks soon!

who: NIL8 / Copyrights / Scifilands

what: punk showcase

where: Hangar 9

when: Saturday, April 18

punk



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