THE BOSTON PHOENIX GUIDE TO PLAYING SHOWS, HANGING OUT, AND FINDING RAD PEOPLE WHILE ON TOUR IN BOSTON, MA

What's inside?
- Cool collectives to email
- How to get a house show
- Booking agent contact info
- Locally-owned bars and venues
- Non-traditional show spaces
- Promoting your show in Boston
- Boston's music-centric neighborhoods
- How to spend your day off here
- Where to eat before your show

THE BOSTON PHOENIX

#DIYorDIE
If you're at SXSW and you thought picking up a photocopied zine was a good idea, chances are you're on the same page as us. It's 2012. Media's changing, music's changing, we know all of this. Economic times are tough for newspapers as much as they are for bands. We've seen and covered the ways the recession has affected our local music scene, for better or for worse. Since we totally get what y'all are going through—we thought we'd put together something important: a DIY guide to Boston specifically geared toward young touring bands who are touring on a budget. As proud Bostonians who are psyched on our local music scene, it bummed us out that so many great Boston-based bands, labels, blogs, and other curators couldn't afford the trip down to Austin this year. We wanted to make sure that they were all represented down here in some way. And we also wanted to make sure that when sweet bands come through town, they know exactly who to hit up. YOU'RE WELCOME. xoxo the boston phoenix department of music
Boston can seem hard to navigate because, well, to be honest, geographically, Boston is hard to navigate. The city of Boston is basically a cluster of rad neighborhoods (okay, some of them suck) that are all connected by really shitty public transportation. That’s not an ideal situation for people who are visiting. On an optimistic note, it allows each of the music-centric spots to develop its own character; within Boston’s music scene, there are several different geographically-based micro-scenes:

[ ALLSTON ] Allston is a good neighborhood to head to for any DIY-minded band, as the neighborhood is known to have a lot of house shows and parties. (Lots of college houses but whatevers.) Some Allston show houses flourish into house-venues, more permanent fixtures with distinct aesthetics. Read more about those + Allston’s bar venues later, but have Great Scott and O’Brien’s Pub on your radar. It’s also one of the most culturally diverse neighborhoods and there are really good places to eat. #GoAllston

[ CAMBRIDGE ] Cambridge is inhabited more by young-working-professionals that rowdy/punky college kids, which leads to a music scene more centered around bars and legit venues. It’s cool though - there are plenty of opportunities to play shows ‘round here. In Central Square along you have two of the cities best show spaces, the Middle East and TTs The Bear’s Place, which reside next door to each other. Middlesex Lounge is a MIT hotspot for electronic acts and DJs, and the Cambridge YMCA is a spot for all-ages shows. Consider Cambridge the Brooklyn to Boston’s Manhattan.

[ SOMERVILLE ] In many ways Somerville is Cambridge’s little brother, but it’s more than just the 17th most densely populated place in the country. It has a thriving scene all its own, from Union Square rock clubs like PAs Lounge, Radio, and Precinct, to Davis Square’s newly minted Davis Square Theatre and historical landmark the Rosebud Diner & Grill, both well-known live show locations. Somerville is a residential city for many of the area’s musicians, and young artists and professionals.

[ JAMAICA PLAIN ] JP, as it’s called, can seem a million miles away from the aforementioned cities and neighborhoods, but within the lines of Centre Street is a DIY community and thriving arts scene rife with galleries, welcome-all venues, and arts spaces.
Great Scott  |  greatscottboston.com  |  1222 Commonwealth Avenue, Allston MA 02134 | Carl Lavin, booking agent: carl@greatscottboston.com, 240 capacity, hosts local + national shows

O'Brien's  |  obrienspubboston.com  |  3 Harvard Ave, Allston MA 02134 | Carl Lavin, booking agent: carl@greatscottboston.com | 80 capacity, hosts local + national shows

T.T. The Bear's Place  |  ttthebears.com  |  10 Brookline Ave, Cambridge, MA 02139 | Carl Lavin, booking agent: carl@cqpresent.com | 300 capacity, hosts local + national shows

The Middle East  |  mideastclub.com  |  472 Mass Ave, Cambridge, MA 02139 | Booking info: Clay Fernald, clay@mideastclub.com or booking@mideastclub.com | upstairs: 190 capacity, Downstairs 595 capacity, both hosts local + national shows

Radio  |  facebook.com/radiosomerville  |  379 Somerville Ave, Somerville, 02143 | booking: radiobarunion@gmail.com | 150 capacity (approximate), hosts local shows
Church  |  churchofboston.com  |  69  
Kilmarnock St , Boston, 02215  |  Nick Blakey, booking agent:  
churchbooking@gmail.com  |  225  
capacity, hosts local + national  
shows  |  note: this club is right  
near Fenway Park, so check the  
Red Sox schedule if you’re  
touring April through September  
(and sometimes October, yo!)  

Middlesex Lounge  |  middlesexlounge.us  |  315 Mass  
Ave , Cambridge MA 02139  |  booking: 617.868-MSEX  |  100  
capacity, hosts local + national  
DJ dance parties and shows  

PA's Lounge  |  paslounge.com  |  345  
Somerville Ave, Somerville, 02143  |  John Allen, booking  
agent: pabooking@gmail.com  |  150  
capacity (approximate), hosts  
local + national shows  

Precinct Bar  |  precinctbar.com  |  70 Union Square, Somerville, MA 02143  |  Patrick McDermott, part  
time booking agent:  
pmcdermott28@gmail.com  |  70  
capacity (approx), hosts local  
shows  

Royale  |  boweryboston.com  |  279  
Tremont St, Boston, 02116  |  Josh  
Bhatti, booking agent  
josh@boweryboston |  800 capacity  
(approx), hosts national shows
[ NON-TRADITIONAL, ABOVEGROUND SHOW SPACES ]

Lorem Ipsum Books
http://www.loremipsumbooks.com
1299 Cambridge Street,
Cambridge, MA 02139
a used book store, also home to the Papercut Zine Library. regularly hosts shows, readings, film screenings, art exhibitions, and workshops. Lorem Ipsum hosts some classes for Corvid College -- Boston's radical free school. To book a show, contact Peter pete@loremipsumbooks.com or the Dreamhouse Show-booking Collective
dreamhousecollective@gmail.com.
good for underground, experimental, out-there, punk, DIY bands.

Yes Oui Si | a multi-media gallery run by young artists and musicians, + regularly hosts shows spanning all genres
http://yesouisisspace.com/ | 19 Vancouver St., Boston MA 02115 | 617 429 9771 | general Qs: yes@yesouisisspace.com events: events@YesOuiSiSpace.com or email the space's managers Miguel Miguel@YesOuiSiSpace.com or Olivia Olive@YesOuiSiSpace.com

The Democracy Center
democracycentershows.wordpress.com | 45 Mount Auburn Street,
Cambridge, MA 02138 | an all-ages, drug and alcohol free community space with an emphasis on DIY ethics. They host a lot of punk and hardcore shows.
Email Kimberly
democr.shows@gmail.com.
The Lily Pad | http://www.lily-pad.net | 1353 Cambridge Street, Cambridge MA | an intimate gallery in Cambridge’s Inman Square (very close to Lorem Ipsum Books) that regularly hosts shows. To book an event, email gill@lily-pad.net, please include a link to your music and/or a description.


[ HOUSES, BASEMENTS, AND OTHER UNDERGROUND SPOTS ]

Boston’s underground, DIY music community really thrives within its house/basement shows. And there are a lot of kool spaces! Whitehaus, GayGardnz, Dreamhaus, the Bean Stoop, Allston City Limits, El Muthership, Wackee Castle, Rug Road spaces, to name a few... however, because these spots are frequently shut down by police and stuff, these places are sorta transient, their names frequently change, and most house/basement venues have minimal Internet presences.

But its not impossible to book a house or basement show in Boston!

A good resource to check out is the Boston Counter Cultural Compass (www.bostonccccompass.com) which is a monthly newsletter that posts all sorts of show-listings, including house shows. Checking out the most recent compass is a good way of knowing which house venues are currently active, and usually there is some sort of contact info included.

On the next page, we’ll note which bookers/collectives are good to reach out to for house shows, too . . .
[ BOOKERS & COLLECTIVES ]

Dreamhouse Collective | A fairly new collective that books shows at Dreamhaus (a tiny living room spot) as well as Lorem Ipsum Books and Great Scott. This collective is receptive to all genres but likes bands with an emphasis on DIY ethics.
dreamhousecollective@gmail.com

Whitehaus Family Record | The Whitehaus is a long-running living room/basement space and home to a collective of artists and musicians. This collective books shows at their house, and other places. |
www.whitehausfamilyrecord.com

CQ Presents | CQ books shows at Great Scott, T.T. The Bear’s, and several other of Boston’s finest independently- and locally-owned/operated bars and venues. Check out www.cgpresent.com to get a feel for the sorts of shows they put together, then email Carl carl.lavin@greatscottboston.com or Josh joshsmithboston@aol.com about booking a show.

Permanent Wave Boston | A new feminist booking collective, which is an offshoot of the NYC-based collective Permanent Wave. Check out facebook.com/permanentwaveboston for updates.

** Bookers marked with stars can all probably help you with a house show!!
Bodies of Water Shows  | BOW has been putting on not-for-profit DIY shows in Boston since 2001, all ages whenever possible. BOW likes psych, punk, weird, pop, electronic, loud, experimental, and awesome music. Tightly associated with the Boston Counter Cultural Compass and the Boston Hassle music blog.
bostonhassle.com ***

Primordial Sounds  | Do you love psych, garage rock, world music, and other out-there soundz? So do these dudez. They book shows, DJ around town, just started a label (!!!), and they run a badass blog.
primordialsounds.blogspot.com
primordialsounds@gmail.com ***

Sippy Cup Everything  | This is the booking/blogging/managing project of one awesome dude named Mike, who has a good ear for the best new soundz in pop, indie rock, electronic, and more. He books at Great Scott sometimes and also at a bunch of different house venues. Check out http://sippycupeverything.com/ and/or email sippycupeverything@gmail.com ***

Slow Blood  | Slow Blood books weird, ambient, experimental, noisy, punk, and a lot more at Great Scott, Obrien's, houses, and other underground spots. Wanna get weird? Get in touch with Will Mayo slowbloodmusic@gmail.com http://www.slowbloodmusic.com/

Freak Flag  | A SUPER AWESOME new endeavor by three kids who are booking shows, DJing around town, and starting an independent newspaper -- hit them up! thefreakflagkids.tumblr.com, thisisfreakflag@gmail.com
TELL THE PHOENIX: Get the show listed by emailing listings@phx.com, and be sure to hit up our music editor Michael too, michael@phx.com (we love mp3s and Bandcamp links, especially). Hit up the Phoenix on twitter via @BostonMusicBlog and/or @BostonPhoenix.

TELL THE BLOGS: There are a bunch of sweet Boston-based music blogs that prob want to know about your show. Check out:

- Allston Pudding
  www.allstonpudding.com -- club + basement + house shows
  the Boston Hassle
  bostonhassle.com -- house + basement shows

- Bradley’s Almanac
  bradleysalmanac.com -- club shows
  Primordial Sounds
  primordialsounds.blogspot.com

- Pilgrims of Sound
  pilgrimsofsound.wordpress.com

- Sleepover Shows
  sleepovershows.com -- club + basement + house shows

- Ryan’s Smashing Life rslblog.com

TELL COLLEGE RADIO: Boston is a college town, and our college radio stations are a huge resource for the music community. They’re basically outposts for touring bands, and a great place to find tons of psyched kids (and cool community members) who love music.

- WTBU www.wtburadio.org
- WECB http://wecb.fm/
- WZBC http://wzbc.org/
- WMBR wmbr.mit.edu/
- WERS wers.org/
- WRBB http://wrbbradio.org
- WHRB’s Record Hospital http://recordhospital.org
[ EATING, DRINKING, AND HANGING OUT IN BOSTON ]

[ ALLSTON ]

Hang out → If you’re playing at Great Scott, O’Brien’s, or one of the other basement venues in “Allston Rock City,” you’ll want to fuel up at Refuge Cafe. They’ve got A+ coffee, dank sandwiches, walls covered in local art, and micro-brews on tap. If you’re looking to wash down $4 tacos with copious amounts of tequila, Lone Star Taco Bar is your best bet.

Drink beer → For something a little more rock n’ roll, head to one of the area’s dives (Silhouette Lounge, Model Cafe) for some loud music and dirt-cheap thrills.

Eat vegan food → Allston has good vegan options. Popular spots are vegan Asian restaurant Grasshopper (1 North Beacon, Peace o’ Pie).

Eat after midnight → If your show gets out late or you’ve got drunk munchies, go to Azama Grill (54 Harvard Avenue, Allston, MA 02134) for falafel, hummus, shawarma, kabobs, and other Middle Eastern fare. One of the few spots in Allston open til 2 AM.

[ CAMBRIDGE ]

(most of these spots are near Harvard Square, Central Square, and Inman Square, three sweet little neighborhoods that are all within walking distance of each other).

Eat → Cambridge’s Vegan Diner and Bakery Veggie Galaxy 450 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, 617-497-1513. veggiegalaxy.net

Drink coffee → 1369 COFFEE HOUSE 757 MASSACHUSETTS AVE. CAMBRIDGE, MA

Buy records → Weirdo Records (does consignment and will buy records from touring bands)

Buy used books → Lorem Ipsum | facebook.com/loremipsumbooks

Read rad zines → Papercut Zine Library | www.facebook.com/papercutzinelibrary

[ JAMAICA PLAIN ]

For local food → City feed and Supply in JP is a sweet spot for really good sandwiches soups and salads, local coffee and local groceries. 66A BOYLSTON ST. & 672 CENTRE ST. JAMAICA PLAIN, MA facebook.com/cityfeedandsupply (This is super close to the Whitehaus, too.)

Buy rad books → Lucy Parson’s Center | radical book store | http://lucyparsons.org/

Drink coffee → ULA CAFE 284 AMORY ST. JAMAICA PLAIN, MA

Enjoy the great outdoors → Breathe deep by Jamaica Pond (jamaicapond.com) and climb trees at The Arnold Arboretum (arboretum.harvard.edu)
Eat local food — Sherman Cafe | 257 Washington Street, Somerville, MA 02143  www.facebook.com/shermancafe
Drink coffee — Diesel Café | 257 Elm Street — Somerville, MA 02144 | diesel-cafe.com
Drink beer — The Independent | 75 Union Square — Somerville, MA 02143 | www.theindo.com
Buy records — Somerville Grooves http://www.facebook.com/SomervilleGrooves
Check out some art — Washington Street Art Center, open Saturday afternoons  www.facebook.com/WashingtonSt

[ OTHER COOL SPOTS ]
The Other Side | 407 Newbury St — Boston, MA 02115, 617 536-8437 | A rad spot for food coffee and beer, esp. in the summer because you can drink on their patio. A place where vegans, vegetarians, and meat-eaters can exist in harmony. Also, you can go to Newbury Comics after, or if its nice, you can wander all the way down to the Boston Commons & Boston Public Gardens. www.theothersidcafe.com
Institute of Contemporary Art | 100 Northern Ave — Boston, MA 02210 (617) 478-3100 www.icaboston.org/
Go to a brewery — Tours of the Sam Adams brewery are free (samueladams.com) and tours of the Harpoon Brewery are $5 (www.harpoonbrewery.com)
Hang @ the Esplanade — Hanging out by the Charles River is always awesome, esp. in the summer. Grab a bag of groceries and have a picnic! Or, you can take a long walk over the Mass Ave Bridge into Cambridge for a beer.

[ PARK YOUR CAR ]
Bands can never seem to figure this out when they’re in Boston. There’s free overnight parking in Lower Allston.

[ THANKS FOR READING ]

This zine has been brought to you by a crew of Boston Phoenix music writers.
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