

The Jesus Lizard's Duane Denison: The Cream Interview

By Adam Gold in [Interviews](#)

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Last week I was fortunate to do an interview with Jesus Lizard guitarist and Nashville resident Duane Denison for [this piece](#) I wrote about the band in the current issue of the *Scene*. I only had so much space for the article and focused exclusively on the band's reunion tour, the U.S. leg of which kicks off on Tues. at Exit/In. However, in my conversation with Denison we touched on much more, including the current state of the music industry, the Shack Shakers [indecent exposure incident](#) at last year's [Rancid RCKTWN](#) show, amusing anecdotes about John Cale, Mike Patton, David Yow and more. Before the interview I posted on Cream to ask if anyone would like to suggest questions. I ended up using the two questions submitted by (user name) Matt. The other

questions he basically answered before I got a chance to ask and a couple came in too late. Enjoy.

Nashville Cream: *So you live in Nashville; how long have you lived here?*

Duane Denison: I've been here just over 10 years.

NC: *So what brought you here?*

DD: Well 10 years ago, the Jesus Lizard pretty much officially broke up. Actually, it will be ten years exactly today I think. We played our first show ever July 1, 1989 and then we decided to break up July 1, 1999.

NC: *For what reason?*

DD: A number of reasons. We had been doing it 10 years longer, actually. We actually started before that but our first official show was in 1989. After 10 years and six or seven studio albums we kind of felt like we had sort of run out. Things had changed, our original drummer, Mac, had left a couple of years before and the chemistry wasn't the same so we just decided to call it a day and that was that...when the band broke up I got a call from Shelton Williams from Hank III, we had some mutual friends and he called and asked if I might want to come down and play guitar in his band, which I did for about a year and a half. That's really what brought me here, and then I just sort of liked it and stayed and got married and bought a house and all that. But yeah, that's what brought me here.

As far as getting back to the reunion thing it's been 20 years since we started and to be honest people have been sort of asking about it for years it seems like. I've been playing with other people and touring and stuff and everywhere I went people would ask about the Jesus Lizard, but to me it just seemed like we haven't been broken up for very long. What's the point 5 years, 6 years there's no reason to reunite, you haven't been apart. What happened this year everything seemed to line up. A) it was ten years from the time we stopped. B) Touch and Go has been remastering all the back catalog and its going to be reissued. There's already a singles pack out and all the albums are coming out in the fall with liner notes and photos and stuff like that. So it just seemed like if we're ever going to do it, let's do it now and our original drummer Mac was amenable to the idea.

We got an offer, actually, last December to come over and play the All Tomorrow's Parties that was curated by Mike Patton and the Melvins. We couldn't do it. We couldn't quite get it together in time for that, it was a little too sudden, but that kind of opened the door to it. We started talking about the possibility of it and then when we found out that Touch and Go was going to reissue the catalog we said well let's do it next year and make a party out of it, so yeah that's kind of how it all came together.