

# Interview with Tim Darcy from Ought



PHOTO CREDIT: Laura Harvey

Any music fan in the 2010s has access to new music at their fingertips. You might get hooked on a band that only a few people know about. After a while they gain a following and before you know it they're playing one of the big venues in town. Take Montreal post-punk act Ought for example; they've only been around since 2012 but they've been steadily making waves in independent music.

They're playing The Met in Pawtucket on May 5 as part of a magnificent bill with Washington, DC, glam punks Priests and two of Providence's finest — Downtown Boys and Way Out. It's a stacked night that aims to please your inner freak. Ahead of the show, Ought frontman Tim Darcy and I talked about collaborating with experimental artist AJ Cornell, observational lyrics, the struggle in being sustainable and what Ought's plans are for the rest of the year.

**Rob Duguay:** Ought started out in 2012 while you, Matt May, Ben Stidworthy and Tim Keen were living together in a communal band space. What was the space like exactly? Was it an apartment, a house or warehouse? Was it a fixture in Montreal's DIY underground scene?

**Tim Darcy:** It was just a regular old apartment. It had previously been an underground queer cabaret so it had a lot of charm. Other than that it was incredibly run-down and grungy. We took turns sharing the windowless room, another room that was divided with drywall we'd bought and propped up, and two normal rooms. We had a little enclave off the living room where we left everything set up and we would play all the time. We had a few shows there, but it certainly wasn't a fixture beyond us and a few others who would drop by to use the space.

**RD:** This past March you released a collaborative album with aural experimentalist AJ Cornell called *Too Significant To Ignore*. It's avant garde and ambient with spoken word, a bit of a departure from the rhythmic post punk of Ought. What inspired you and AJ to do this project?

**TD:** It's funny how releases get timed out. AJ and I actually wrote those songs about three or four years ago and then in 2014 finally got around to recording them. It took us about a year and a half to mix, master and find someone to put it out, which ended up being the good folks at NNA Tapes. It took a while mostly because AJ was moving and I was hurtling around with Ought. AJ and I are really great friends and at first we started by making drone and ambient music, something we both really enjoy. At some point it occurred to me to try some spoken word and so it took that direction for the tape. It isn't

really a progression from Ought or anything and I don't listen to that much experimental music, though I find it to be kind of an odd and limiting term in my opinion. I love what AJ does and I appreciate the opportunity to try some plain spoken word.

**RD:** Your lyrics have an observational style. Do you find yourself getting ideas for songs just through various interactions or does it run deeper than that?

**TD:** Yeah I suppose I'm doing a lot of musing in my lyrics as well as in poetry. Thinking about life? What else is there to write about? Even when I read novels I'm usually looking for some kind of humanness or insight. Even just in the spark of something that you can't put into words, like with visual art. There is something wrenching about feeling the connection to the person that created what I am looking at. I don't know what it is like for every person but for me that is paramount. That connection where you get a bit of spirit coming across, almost regardless of what is being said.

**RD:** Ought is still a fairly young band. What do you find to be the biggest struggle independent bands face these days when it comes to being sustainable?

**TD:** Everything is in flux, it definitely seems like there is a lot of uncertainty with people unsure of what their futures will look like. In some senses that can be beautiful, as people are more capable of changing. In other senses it is stressful and unsettling.

**RD:** Last year Ought released their 2nd album, *Sun Coming Down*, what are the band's plans for later this year? Do you plan on going back into the studio or do you just plan on touring?

**TD:** We're touring through to the fall at which point we'll be starting work on a new album. We're all looking forward to that!

*Tickets to see Ought, Priests, Downtown Boys & Way Out @ The Met on May 5:*

*[https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/3516050/oughtpriests-on-sale-210-noon-pawtucket-the-met?cobrand=themetri#\\_ga=1.168862177.1725885659.1324682790](https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/3516050/oughtpriests-on-sale-210-noon-pawtucket-the-met?cobrand=themetri#_ga=1.168862177.1725885659.1324682790); Like Ought on Facebook:*

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