

Peter and Josh's first cover bands provided the necessary growing pains that eventually cemented Fallout's foundation. Fallout became local legends, and it was only partly on the strength of their music—much of the band's success was due to the special working relationship that existed between Peter and Josh. John Campos had an up-close view into what made their chemistry work. "Peter was the artistic guy. He didn't really care about the business aspect. He was always focused on writing and creating. That was his goal. Josh, on the other hand, was much more business oriented. He wanted to promote. He wanted to put together a marketing plan. So the two guys together balanced each other out. They needed each other, and it worked."

Peter's sister Pat characterizes Josh as "a genius" and "an extremely talented guy." And there was a kind of familial bond there. "Josh's mother loved Peter, and my mother loved Josh. They were truly like brothers." Cathy notes that, "Josh and Peter were a lot alike. They were both very thickheaded, very controlling, and very, very smart. Yet humble."

Fallout's live shows in Brooklyn were often successful thanks to the band's aggressive promotional efforts. Fallout had a particular look, a concept, a vibe. It was not only a real band in terms of original material, but their attempts to create an escapist world, or something more along the lines of speculative science fiction, resonated with rock fans who weren't totally aligned with the disco craze that dominated the late '70s and early '80s.

Longtime friend and collaborator Richard Termini states, "Peter and Josh both had a great talent for design and promotion. Their posters, buttons, and artwork for the band were terrific. They and their crew would poster Brooklyn like no other band around. I suspect there are still places with their posters stuck to a wall here or there."

Born in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, in 1956, it was Richard Termini who first recorded Peter's music. A Brooklyn native who spent some of his youth in Orange County, California, and now lives in Australia, Termini played in a number of bands throughout the '70s, most notably Dune, and the New York Space Ensemble (the latter name of which he continues to record under today). Veering between progressive, avant-garde, electronic, and new wave music, Termini specialized in keyboards and was a student of recording technique. In 1977 he built and operated Soundscape Recording Studio on Avenue M and East Eighteenth Street in Brooklyn. In 1979, Termini's then-wife, Vicki Zollo, also the singer for Dune, saw Fallout playing at a street fair. She approached the band and told them about her husband's studio.

"I first heard Fallout play in Josh's basement after meeting them at my place," remembers Termini. "I thought they were great and made a deal with Josh to record them. It wasn't long before I was doing their live sound and working as their producer. By the way," he adds, "none of them had any tattoos at this time!"<sup>†</sup>

Termini saw serious potential in the young band. "This was a time when punk and disco ruled, but I still had a place in my heart for heavy metal, and there were few all-original bands playing metal around Brooklyn and New York as far as I could hear. Until I met Peter, Josh, John, and Louie. Fallout was fantastic. They were the real thing. A real band with real writers. Peter was the main writer and idea man with John contributing. The big sweeping concepts of the pieces were Peter's, but on some stuff John would contribute and add extra melodic polish and amazing guitar solos. 'Batteries Not Included' is a great little sci-fi story set to progressive metal."

Peter's talent as a bass player was also recognized by the more experienced, slightly older Termini. "Peter had a great way with words, but he was also a very good bass player, clearly influenced by Black Sabbath's Geezer Butler. Peter liked to design and modify his basses. I remember him cutting big holes in his bass and painting it himself. He added chains and such. He was always playing around with his gear like that. He used to rip the strings off the bass with his bare hands at the end of the shows."<sup>‡</sup>

When the bass strings were still on, Termini captured Peter's instrument on tape, along with the rest of the Fallout ensemble. At the time, Soundscape had a dual 4-track setup (making it, essentially, an 8-track studio), which was good enough for them, and probably seemed like Abbey Road to a band of seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds who had never seen the inside of a recording studio before. Fallout recorded one song per session with Termini, spread out over the course of a year. From late 1979 to the spring of 1981, five songs were demoed: "Rock Hard," "Batteries Not Included," "Parthenophagia" (which evolved into the also-recorded "Executioner"), "Under the Wheels," "Bleed for Me," and "Fallout," plus various incomplete odds and ends. For the band's eponymous song, Termini

<sup>†</sup> Not long after meeting Termini, however, Peter got his first tattoos—a griffin on his right bicep and a mountain lion on his left. They symbolized strength and his admiration for animals. Both tattoos were done by Brooklyn-based tattoo artist Huggy Bear Ferris at a time when tattooing was still illegal in New York City.

<sup>‡</sup> This particular bit of theater eventually became a feature of Manowar shows, when bassist Joey DeMaio would do the same at the end of their sets. Forming in 1980 and hailing from Auburn, in upstate New York, one wonders if DeMaio saw Peter performing this stunt with Fallout and adopted it as his own.