

JOURNAL

in International Alternative Christian Music Journal

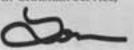
With each issue of this publication, we have tried to incorporate suggestions from our readers. Many have said they enjoy our interviews, while other have pointed out we could be interviewing artists who are less known and more alternative. So in this issue we've given you three interviews, two of which are unknown to many.

Another frequent question concerns our product listing section. We began ACM Journal because there were no publications that gave an overview of the international alternative Christian music scene. Album reviews can be helpful to some, but they are often filled with personal bias and fluff, many independent are never reviewed, while others are mentioned years after their product was released. Reviews can be influenced by advertising pressures, real or imagined. You'll find no album reviews in this publication. Instead, we'll interview many of the most outstanding artists, feature their music on our annual compilation cd's, and highlight noteworthy projects in our product listing section. To make a long explanation even longer, the music listings are based on the premise that one cannot find what one does not know exists (a concept that has some parallels in Christianity). We

have tried to present enough information for our readers to find the titles listed. Obviously they won't all be on the shelf at your local religious gift shop or record outlet. Therefor, we've given you addresses for mail order stores, catalogues, and even many of the artists themselves. We've also listed addresses for other publications. We are the first to admit that we'll never be all things to all people. We've added two new musical categories - Rap and Alternative Dance. There are also many new and upcoming projects listed.

And finally, many of our readers are involved in music or have artistic friends. We will continue to print information relative to the business end of the music industry, emphasizing issues relevant to independent artists. If you have suggestions for future articles or interviews, or would just like to share your ideas or opinions, please call or write. We look forward to your involvement as mature individually and as a publication.

In Christian Service,



A special thanks to Lionel Vargas, Wim Boluyt, John Thompson, Bill Power, Kevin Allison, Charles Gates, Anne Slaphenson, Sincerely Paul, Code of Ethics, Dig Hay Zoose, Greg Griffin, our advertisers and our subscribers.

### **ACM JOURNAL**

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## MISC. NOTES

So, you're in a band. You've got a solid set and some shows under your belt. Through your hard work you've managed to scrape up about \$4,000. A guy calls you up and tells you be wants to "help" you by taking your money. He, of course, promises you all sorts of wonderful things in return for your investment. What do you do? You tell him to kindly find another fool who will fall for what is clearly a complete rip-off. In a day and age when some secular bands are spending 1 million dollars to record their albums, what can you realistically do with your meager \$4,000? Suprisingly enough, you can really do a lot more than you think. To demonstrate, let's look at what you can do for under \$1,000. For example, with \$890 you could start with 48 two-color t-shirts, 100 two-color 4 inch square stickers, 500 black and white glossies, cover studio time for a 16-track 3 song demo mixed down to DAT, and walk away with 70 copies of the tape with inserts. Then you market the shirts, the tapes, a few stickers and some photos. By my estimate, after expenses, you'd have a profit of about \$50. That may not sound like much, but you now have \$4,050 in the bank. Seventy people have your tape, and they'll probably share it with 1 or 2 other people. That means, collectively, maybe 120 people are listening to your tunes. Forty-eight people are wearing your t-shirts - free publicity! Are you beginning to get the picture? The idea is to make your money work for you.

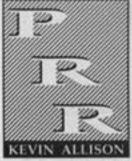
Something else to keep in mind - if you don't have the money to get quality merchandise, DON'T DOTT! You'll be cutting your own throat. Nobody wants to buy t-shirts that shrink so small after one wash that you can't wear them. Nobody wants a tape that sounds like it was recorded in a giant soup can and falls apart in your tape deck. Save your money until you can do it right. Meanwhile.

practice and do more shows.

Now what? Re-invest your money. Make more shirts and tapes. Start putting together a demo package to send to record companies (i.e. tape, photo, bio, sticker) if that is what you wish to pursue. Create an image and develop a following. for your band. You might consider a responsible and reliable booking/promotion company to help you with contacts. I strongly suggest you only work with people that you thouroughly check out first - don't ever deal with any individual or company that asks you to give them money upfront without a written contract promising a tangible return on your investment. In other words, if you're not getting tapes, promo photos and so forth, take your money elsewhere. Record/booking companies are businesses just like any other. They need to make money to survive. Sometimes they will go to extraordinary lengths to get that money. Even the Christian music industry is not exempt from underhanded business tactics.

Those living in the greater Seattle area have been faced with other major obstacles. No support from Christian radio, no major venues, no promotion, nor communication between bands and interested individuals. Now for some good news... November marks the opening of the Solid Rock Cafe at Calvary Fellowship of Seattle. Every Friday night, this club will feature Northwest bands, dance nights, open mikes and more. It has a new full-size stage and P.A., and an espresso bar. Also coming in 1992: A music festival featuring rock, metal, alternative, punk, and rap bands. We want to see this become an annual event. January/February will be the starting point for the first NCMI Network (Northwest Christian Music Industry) meeting, A time for studio people, musicians, bands, and pro-moters to get together to exchange numbers and share what they are involved in. Rumor has it that there is strong support for a new Christian radio station with a balanced playlist. There is also interest for a Christian music store (no, not a bookstore). If you have any questions about any of these things, need booking or promotion infromation, or just want to talk, please call Bill at (206) 782-5407.

## VIDEO KILLS



The Buggles were right my friends ...and it's only taken nine years for their prophetic MTV track Video Killed the Ratio Star to weave its inevitable webaround an industry which presently appears to be inches from the back door of Mdme.

wax. The question "Beta or VHS?" quickly replaced ordinary dinner dubitations such as "red or white wine?," "meat or potatoes?" and "salt or peoper?".

Infact, if the classic track Tales of the Great Ullysies had ever been caught in the swirling vortex of modern video delusion, we might be asking ourselves a far more serious question. Creme or Sugar? The affordability and visual ecstasy that modern day music offers for many of our prima donna artists has gotten way out of hand. And I'm not just talking about the secular frontier, where people like Alice Cooper can call every person under the age of 18 "Stoopid", while tossing in a few buxom roadblocks amongst his distorted video trail mix.

As you can already tell by the tone of this piece, this exposé will not be some self-serving milk toast plea to be a good little boy and join your local 4H establishment. Let's just consider this opinion a warning of sorts; to the future of our visual industry and the youth which look to our artist's example and instruction. MTV has taken the sultry and suggestive radio lyric and given it arms, legs, tentacles and God knows what else. In other words, they have become the landlords of Enema Cinema and our young people are paying the rent.

Christian film kings have appropriately and obviously avoided the unrelatable combination of music performance and scantily clad women. In fact, the closest we've ever come may have been the old Stormie O'Martian aerobics videos (or was it the classic "Amash-Aid: The Concert"). However, I feel that we're already on the verge of touching the serpent's tail by turning ordinary, ministry-oriented artists into sleek, streamlined, ready-for-idolatry figurines.

Much like the bronzed televangelist (a.k.a "Two-Take Tilden"), our most admired artists make up for what they can't achieve on DAT or in concert by lip-syncing and air-brushing their way into our VCR or video channel through elaborate sets, props and makeup. Reality quickly emerges, sad to say, once they descend from the golden platform and return to their humble surroundings. Hair extensions are folded and tucked neatly into a moth-free environment... the two rolls of duct tape that held in their gut must be surgically removed in order to pull off shiny rock boots and the quick tan lotion that would make Don Ho envious must be cleaned off with a forklift and blowtorch.

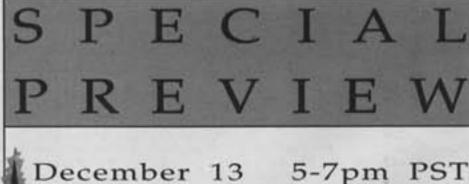
It's no secret that concept and concert video is the way to go economically. And this, of course, is the major lure. Video rentals across the country have doubled over the past five years. Live concert attendance is down at least 30% from last summer and ticket prices have escalated 15% in the same time frame. Fewer and fewer concert hounds are leaving the security of their 99 cent concert hall, renting instead glossy reproductions of Rush, Yes, White Heart or Amy due to the exorbitant cost of an arena ticket (\$23 average). Even Metallica's lead singer, James Hetfield, whose band has just completed only their second video, feels the crunch and compromise. "Nowadays it's really strangeall these giant acts selling millions of records, and no one comes to see them," Hetfield told Entertainment Weekly, "They can watch them on MTV, pretty much. And they can get a better look at

As a child, I was blessed to have a father who allowed me to become "junior disc jockey" on our ride home from grade school. With the touch of a button I was able to hear Brownsville Station's "Smokin" In the Boys Room", Sweet's "Ballroom Blitz" and "I'm Not In Love" by 10CC just before the garage door closed loudly behind our bronze cruiser. The radio was my remote control and my mind became its backdrop. At that time of my life I didn't need preconceived video images to decipheralyricist's intentions. Istill don't. When a classic track envelopes my surroundings, a certain mental aroma creeps up from behind and returns me to the song's point of reference. Notice the word "classic track", a term which now relates to any song recorded before the birth of MTV; a three letter word which often carries more weight than G-O-D in the eyes of today's secular artist, management and label team.

As you can tell, video bores me to tears. In fact, if there were such a thing, I would much rather watch a 24-hour channel devoted exclusively to fish cleaning and the history of bait. Sarcastic, yet serious, I feel that this industry's vid-kings may want to re-evaluate their intentions before video kills the Christian radio and concert star. Begin by eliminating the ego barons whose soul desire is to be the next Jon Bon Jovi or Kip Winger. If Jesus were a modern day producer, he would probably concentrate on the concept (or parabalic) video

which would translate a message through a sequence of relative events. Concert and stage shots have their place, in small doses, especially for those whose geographical status make it impossible to view today's most popular acts in the live setting.

I'm sure that this opinion will be quickly extinguished with even the smallest sight of disdate, yet its an eerie feeling that has been rustling through my soul for several months. Video certainly has the power to minister, edify and entertain, as almost any medium does. However, it may also provide our naïve and absorbent masses with just another excuse to worship the little black container that lives inside the little black book that keeps the big black book in the top dresser drawer. I don't hate videom; just cheeseball video. I don't hate people; just the ones who star in cheesball video. In fact, I don't even hate cheeseballs; just the ones that try to jump out of the can when I pop open the safety cap...



December 20 5-7pm PST December 20 5-7pm PST December 27 5-7pm PST

BETRAYAL

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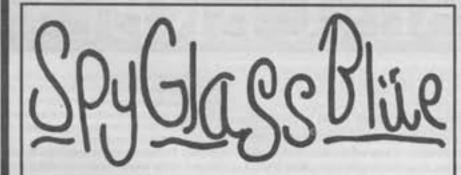
JOHN THOMPSON, Chicago, True News. Is alternative music actually happening large-scale in the Christian Market? No. you're kidding! Check this out, Blande Vinyl, only 7 months old, will have fourteen or fifteen albums released before the end of '911. They'll soon bring us a re-released Dead Artist Syndrome project Prints of Darkness and a collection/compilation of Lust Control, as well as Sincerely Paul, Acoustic Shack, Dietiphobia, Shelly Rogers and Love Life. R.E.X. is also not silent these days. Signed artists include Circle of Dust, Code of Ethics, and possibly Crying Out Quiet. Hot new alternative rock from Koala-land. Some of you may have picked up an import E.P. by a group called Tall Stories a few years back. They've since changed their name to Seven Stories and signed with Colum bia Records. From just across the ocean, Stress Music is bringing several Kiwi (New Zealand) bands - Hunting Man, Jono Jack, and Luke Hurley to name a few: ACM Journal is unleashing their 2nd CD sampler as a perk to stimulate subscriptions. Nineteen bands for \$5 is cool in my book, anyway. The Throes are going to tour. God voted The Choir best all around people in general. Over the Rhine is still unsigned, but since they've turned down most of the big-wig CCM labels I'm not too worried. Word has it that Warner Brothers is going to push David Mullen's first single. Mission of Mercy just released Cages Crashing, their best, darkest, crunchiest, most gothic tape to date. Within the last couple of months, they changed guitar players (now Mark Schwartzburg, Kings X guitar tech) and started recording again. If this is ever released for sale, it will be even botter than "Cages Crashing." The Alarm's Dave Sharp released his debut solo album - very bluesy gritty Rock & Roll. Interesting lyrics too. Chagall Guevara gets my vote for best alternative band of '91. Now Sparrow is going to release this debut, self titled album. One promo piece I received had the band called Chagall Guavara with Steve Taylor. I wonder if the postscript will stick. Anybody with a few extra bucks want to come to Chicago and start a decent radio station? Our WYLL 106.7 will reportedly go "All-Talk" within 6 months. That's great, there really is a need for more talk Christian Radio, isn't there? The new artsy and moody Ocean Blue album is out. It's very cool, even better than their debut. Painted Orange is out with their first mainstream StarSong release There could soon be literally dozens more "underground" relea able. There seems to be a renaissance in independent music lately. Hooray! Mortification's supposedly "Radical" art cover is a joke! P.S. Hi Ed! Now out on the ever extinct list is Urban Edge! Our friends from the south decided that a name and identity change was a must. They changed their name to Two Pound Planet and have stopped all sales of Hydrogen Juketox cd's and cassettes. We haven't heard about any Planet tapes yet. Also included is Situation Taboo. They're in the studio hoping to use a new tape to score a big-time record deal and therefore don't want to sell anymore old demos. Such goes the demise of these bands. Oh well. The beat goes on and more bands are popping up everywhere.

WIM BOLUYT, Holland, Pure Rock Report. Tuesday night and back home again. Sitting with a cup of coffee in my hand and still enjoying the bath that washed away two eight-hour boat trips and four days of the usual Greenbelt Festival dirt away, my thoughts wander back to England. It was a very good festival, like the previous four I attended. But perhaps this year was even better, because I choose what I wanted to hear rather than run like a mad dog after all that's new. But choice means alot gets lost. In fact, I didn't see a whole lot of good bands and performers. Some of them were ill, like Michael Sweet of Stryper (pneumonia) and Mark Heard. Stryper had played at the Dutch Flevo Festival with Oz Fox doing lead vocals, but here they decided to cancel. Mark Heard canceled the second time in a row and yes-both times ill. Peter Case, Scaterd-Few and No Laughing Matter were promised to us by the pre-festival news, but they were not there.

The Electrics are a rootsy, celtic rock band from Glasgow who just released and Dresmu on Full Circle Records, but like Detritus, 7th Angel and Ben Okafor, I didn't have a chance to see them. I saw Dan Donovan of Tribe of Dan but missed his performance. Dan described Tribe of Dan's cd Shool up as "13 tracks of pure mooserock." Raw and raunchy, but passionate as nothing else - a great band indeed. Dave Sharp of the Alarm performed an acoustic song on the main stage from his solo album. I missed the opportunity to speak with writers like Aussie Tim Winton and American Harold Fickett. The latter wrote a critical biography of the late, great Flannery O'Connor called Images Of Grace. Never without controversy, this year's festival had seminar titles like God's Gift Of Gayness? and The Sacred Sex Life Of Adrian Plass as well as a seminar which offered a discussion between a Christian and a real witch. But like Martin Evans, General Manager of Greenbelt explained about the theme Wrestling With Angels in the festival's souvenir programmme: "It's now a firm tradition that leading Christian thinkers from around the world - often from politically troubled areas - visit each summer to share with us what they have found the Gospel of Jesus to mean." That's why Mike Yaconelly, Stewart Henderson and all the others were there. Speaking of seminars, Steve Scott's three lectures under the title of his new book about the arts, Crying For A Vision, were great. As was his poetry performance in The River. The Throes played a good set, though still a young band. Sam Hill released his new project Thunder and Rain and played a wonderful set. So did Jeff Johnson (though much too short) Billy Penn's Brother and The Violet Burning. Hope Springs Eternal stays a promising band, sounding like a cross between Adam Again and the Seventy Sevens playing Violent Femmes songs, though they still wrestle with being and staying a band. Their promo single sounds great. This Picture played most of their new worldwide release A Violent Impression. This is the best new band I have seen this year. Their album is something to look for! A little disappointing was Cactus World News. Too much U2 and too little of their black gospel without a hip-hop beat. Gary Hall and the Stormkeepers did. a wonderful set, playing their new single Jesus Christ (a Woodie Guthrie cover that U2 did once) which will soon be released on Wide Open To The World. Gary proved himself an amazing guitar player and his Violent Femmes cover of I Held Her In My Arms was simply fun. And now that we are talking about fun, Chagall Guevara was really fun, though a little too loud for my ears. Galactic Cowboys was a big surprise. They filled in for

So it's time for another cup of coffee, and I'm still enjoying the bath I had. I listening again to the At The End Of The Pier Show od by Marc Catley and Geoff Mann. Who said progressive rock is dead?

TOM STEPHENSON, Seattle, ACM Journal. Alternative music news is now changing on almost a weekly basis. In just one week, a regional compilation cd of 14 alternative, club-oriented Christian artists from Seattle. Vancouver and Portland was completely defined. Already over half of the artists have committed for a Spring release, including Gloria, Johnny & the Stickmen, Shattered Image, Don't Know, and Poor Old Lu. The Alternative Dance and Modern Rock formats should begin developing quickly over the next several months. Code of Ethics is setting high standards for alternative dance while others like Adagio and Tim McLaughlin will soon make their distinctive marks. Painted Orange's remarkable self-titled independent release in 1991 was tailor-made for college radio and alternative formats. however StarSong's release is more appropriate for AC/CHR formats. True Tunes may still have a few copies of their original cassette. Deitiphobia is nurturing other industrial-dance and post-modern bands across the country, in addition to finishing their upcoming projects. And finally, Jeff Johnson has several upcoming projects and will be appearing in a live concert in Seattle during November. There is more information sprinkled throughout the Artist & Product Lisings section starting on Page 11.





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## SINCERELY PAU

ACMJ: I think this is the first tape I've ever listened to where all the song titles are one or two, three words.

RAY: Actually, that wasn't a conscious thing, but I had always admired a few bands that had one-word titles. Hooked back at the album after it was released and thought, "Wow, we actually did that a little bit!" don't think Jim did that on purpose, that's just the way it turned out to be.

ACMJ: Saving everything you have to say for the song itself?

RAY: There you go.

JIM: There have been times I wanted them to be a little longer, and they're like, "No, just cut it down, cut it down!"

ACMJ: The songs are really rich, very complex...you're trying to convey a message even with the style that you're using?

SP: A lot of us can speak on that. We're pulling together a lot of different influences. At times we're pulling those influences into a four-minute song, sometimes we're pulling them into a seven-minute song, but we're just trying to be original, and I guess the sound you hear is what comes from our different

ACMJ: Not that you're trying to sound like anyone, just doing what comes naturally, and that's what you're getting. Are these songs written from personal experiences, or are they things that you've seen around you? There's a lot of desperation.

JIM: Some is from personal experience, and some of it is from talking with other people that have been through circumstances. So I can bring out the realness, I believe, of the lyrics and what the message is trying to say.

RAY: Mike, our keyboard player, made a comment in a radio interview that we are not a band for Christians nor a band for non-Christians, we're just a band that wants to address everyone that may be hurting or may be victimized. But, in a newspaper article last week, we made it very clear that we are all five born-again Christians. That certainly isn't going to limit us ( I hope ) to playing in churches and church socials.

ACMJ: Your backgrounds as Christians, then, have influenced the project?

SP: Oh, definitely! I think it's going to be like that forever. Thope you can tell that in the

ACMJ: What led you to print the number for the help line, and why this one?

IIM: I felt that it would be a good idea, should the lyrics stir up anything inside that people might need...as far as feeling or whatever it means in their life ... we want to be able to provide something or someone that they could talk to if the need was that great. We're not sure who's going to get our album, but we believe if there was someone out there that

was suicidal or going through a time that an emotional injury has taken place in their life, they do need to talk to somebody who is a Christian and a professional ... we would refer them to that. So, I think as you go through the lyrics you'll kinda understand, that speaks for itself. The reason for the referral is because of some of the issues we do talk about in the lyrics itself. And, we have their permission.

ACMJ: Is that something you work into

yourliveshows?

RAY: Definitely. We make ourselves available after every show. And we handle a church show differently than a secular club show. Nevertheless, we certainly don't believe that just because we're playing for Christians, that means they have their life in order. There's no one out there who doesn't need someone that they can relate to that looks and talks and acts the same way that they do...that maybe has felt the same things that they've felt. So we always (always is imperative) try to make ourselves available to give some type of invitation to at least come back and talk to us afterwards. We're interested in what's going on with them. And, of course, we believe Jesus is the one true

ACMJ: You're playing a variety of venues

SP: Definitely! We laugh because just last Saturday night we found ourselves in almost a poolhall, a bar basically, and we were playing with some non-Christian bands. So yeah, we play a variety. We've had response...even before the album came out...and people that have seen us outside the state respond to us through our post office box saying, you know, gosh, the lyrics have really touched me...the lyrics have done this, the music has really...thank you, we really heard what you had to say. And that was before the album was out. So, we know that something is going right. And we feel that God is using it, touching peoples lives where they're at - whether it be someone that's victimized or abused or somebody that, like one of the songs thats on there, might be having a problem with wanting to wait until marriage for sex. Those types of issues, So, we've had good response

ACMJ: You want to pursue this full-time? SP: We don't know. The only thing that we've ever said is wouldn't it be great if we didn't have 40-hour per week jobs, then we could devote 100% of our attention to music for the Lord, through the talents He's given us. If He ever decides to do that, we hope that we can just support ourselves, or families. None of us are married at this time. We hope that one day we can do that. We definitely open ourselves up for a lot more attack or persecution or whatever from more angles, but it wouldn't be any different. If we could learn to lean on God right now in the small places, it'll help us to lean on Him if we ever were to get into a big place.

ACMJ: What do you have to offer as a band, and as individuals, to listeners that's

unique to Sincerely Paul?

SP: Well, I think the song Bear My Soul is basically what were trying to offer. I don't want to convey that every album we're going to come across the same way, because we've had people already think that we're completely like a one-message band. I think that God leads us to write songs of all different types, things just happened to come around this way at this certain season of our life. I think what we have to offer is the fact that we want to be able to steer issues in peoples lives - that they can be able to bear our burdens with one another, talk to one another, and fellowship with one another - in regard to whatever they may be going through in their lives. Because, as far as the music that we do and the people that we see at our shows, this dark music scene its very depressing. It's very hopeless. There's a lot of negative feelings in it. So for a lot of people, who are very secluded, they'll need to be able to talk and open up to someone, and experience God's healing. I think that's probably the biggest theme right now, and what we feel God leading us to do.

ACMJ: Now, you put out a number of things on your own. Do you feel that you weren't getting the penetration of the market going it alone. And why Blonde Vinyl Records, what led you towards them?

SP: We're going to be really honest with you. We negotiated over the past few years with a few different labels, but we figured as long as no one was willing to sign us, we were going to go ahead and put out material on our own. We were going to make it available as something for fans and something just to give to people to take home with them, with the lyrics on them and our phone number on it. Just before we signed the Blonde Vinyl deal, we negotiated with two or three labels, and Blonde Vinyl simply had the best deal. It's a very comfortable thing being right here in Orange County. We've played with L.S.U. a number of times...Breakfast with Amy. We just know a lot of those people. It was just a very comfortable thing, and it was a great

ACMJ: So, do you feel that's going to make a difference for you as far as distribution and reaching a much wider audience than going italone'

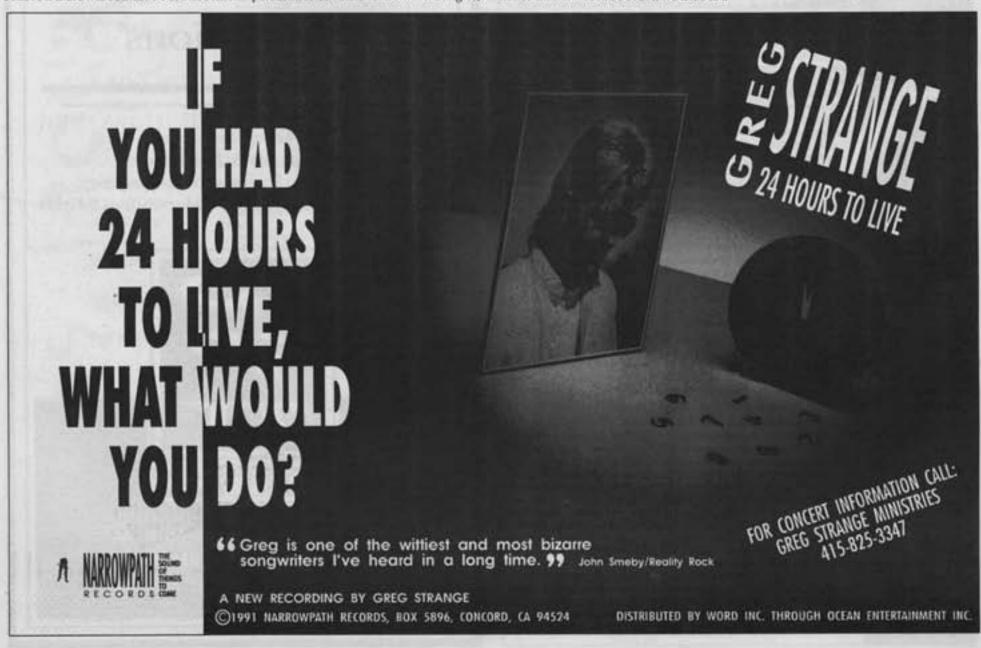
MIKE: I don't think there's any question that Spectra's National Distribution is going to help in getting [product] into more kids hands than it would be ever if we tried to a mailing on our own, or anything like that. Also, Blonde Vinyl is doing really well in getting the cd's out to all the radio stations...calling radio stations around the country. He's also getting us distribution in the U.K. and Canada. So, as far as I can tell (and I've worked in a bookstore for ten years now), there's tons of independent stuff there that never reaches a lot of kids. It's just a lot easier for them to get it...more accessible that

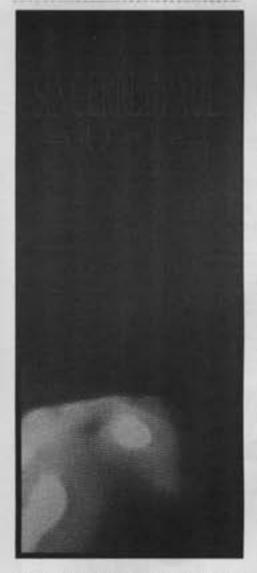
ACMJ: What sort of adviced o you have for other artists that are in the same place you were two or three years ago?

SP: Work hard to define your craft. Don't compromise spiritually. Don't compromise financially. Don't compromise physically. Once you've done that, you're just another commodity. You'll lose your originality and you'll lose your drive. Even your blessings from God.

ACMJ: So, all or nothing?

RAY: I might add that in the course of a three or four years, we became discouraged quite a few times. Especially...as you get a little bit older. Well, none of us are terribly





old, but even through the early twenties, getting out of the teen years and things, we got discouraged many times. But I think we allowed ourselves to be encouraged by the Holy Spirit Himself. We let God encourage us. And that's what motivated us to continue, we were always encouraged with something else, to keep on keeping on. On our own strength, we probably would have given up. Idon't think that if another band didn't really feel that God was doing something with them...I mean, why fool yourself? You're probably better off to just twang your guitar, and write some songs for your friends and goof around. But, if you take it seriously, you've got to feel that God's behind you, otherwise it seems just unbearable without

ACMJ: Where do you see yourselves heading from here? You mentioned that you're doing some club shows, and you're getting product out to the college market too. Where do you go from here?

SP: We certainly don't know where our next release will be from. We have a very good relationship with Blonde Vinyl. But, we've been up front with them - and obviously you must be thinking in your head, they have secular management. We've intended this album to definitely put out what we feel God has given us to minister about, and to put it out there. We're just going to continue to keep pushing forward. The secular management is taking the album and shopping it with major labels. We're just as serious about what we're doing as any secular band you'd hear on radio up there. So, we're going to let her continue to push it, and we're going to play and put ourselves in front of a lot of people. We're going to do our thing, and let her do her thing. We really don't know where the next step will be, but we're continuing forward.

ACMJ: Tell me more about the title of the disc, Grieve.

SP: First of all, grieving is not really a negative thing in how we feel. Because of what we've dealt with ... what I've dealt with personally in my life, the healing that God has bought me through, and the people that I've talked to when I wrote these songs...grieving is usually a necessary process to grieve out all those hurts to God. To stop being in denial and let Him be able to heal you from the insideout. Actually, it's a very positive title. Inviting people to stop being in denial, and to come out and let God see the real you. To heal you from the inside out, that's basically what was behind the title of Grieve. We make a point to make ourselves available. We like people to come up and see if we really can relate, you know, just to communicate with us more. Instead of just accepting us just on a stage, and singing to them six feet higher than they are, and then going behind a black curtain to never see them again. I think we'd like for them to see who we really are, by coming up and checking us out for

ACMJ: Anything else you'd like to add before we finish?

MIKE: Feel free to write us at any time too. If you include your address in there, we'll personally answer the letter. I mean, we don't have a secret secretary that does that for us. We do that ourselves.

### 'M JOURNAL'S

When we had 2 subscribers, we had a pretty good idea who our readers were. With a thousand, it's a bit harder to get the details. You could help us by completing this survey and sending it (or a copy) to us with your ideas, suggestions and opinions. We are interested! But, please . . . return it as quickly as possible so we can act on your suggestions and your ideas.

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## KOKF

We began our Interview with Greg Griffin from KOKF in Issue 6. We've continued where we left off.

Continued from Issue 6...

KOKF: ...in the same token, when you look at young, mobile, above average income, white collar workers, Oklahoma City is 206% of the national average. That accounts for almost 40% of our total population. These people are hip, they're going to be rocking and rolling. That's one of the problems, a lot of people want a panacea. We'll do this, and it will work everywhere. I've heard that forever, and it used to work back in the 60's. Well, we're not in the 60's anymore.

And the attitudes, the life-styles, the way people conduct themselves, the way they behave... are so different now. If radio programmers are not tuned into what's happening in that marketplace, I don't think they are going to achieve the kind of penetration they must achieve in mainstream. If you really want to evangelize, then you have to look at the kinds of things, that KOKF has looked at. Last year, Oklahoma City dropped its last remaining FM easy listening radio station...gone. According to George Barnum, research indicates that the character and make-up of the babyboomers and baby-busters is not (even among those who are Christians) going to support the paid religious radio programs anymore. This is not going to happen anymore. They won't support that stuff. And we're looking at the probability that in just a few years, those 40 to 60 years of age will want classic rock, album rock, hit music sounds, and oldies from the 60's and 70's. That's what they are going to want on the radio. It's not going to be easy listening & adult contemporary for the older folks. For the younger folks, we see it progressing to the contemporary hit music genre. That's where we've got to be if we really want to be evangelistic.

ACMJ: Have you given any thought at all about...and I don't know if there are FCC regulations to prohibit it...having a short-wave broadcast of your station that could be picked across the country, as well as Canada and Mexico.

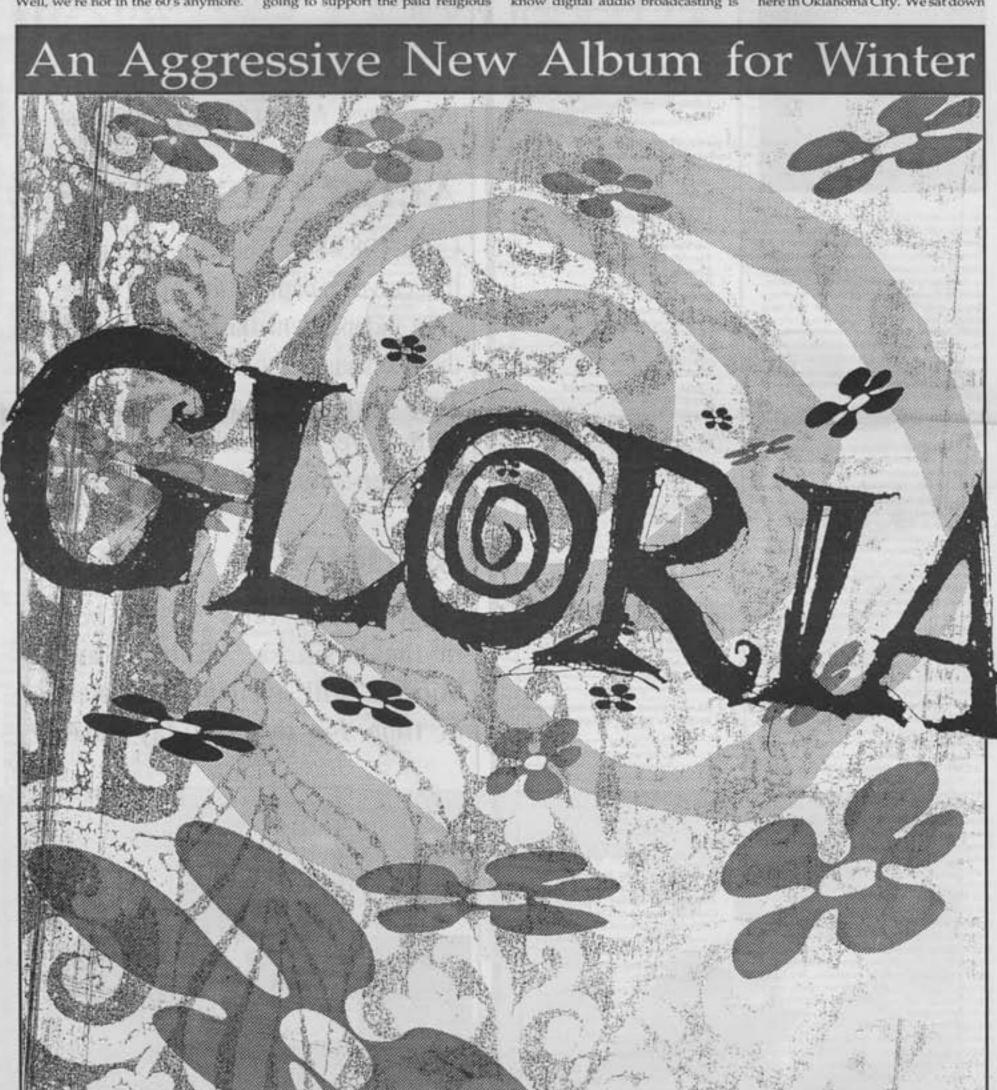
KOKF: That's a new idea. We have never even talked about such an idea at this point...to go shortwave. We know digital audio broadcasting is ACMJ: I've given a great deal of thought of the limitless possibilities if you could digitally broadcast over shortwave. You could literally cover an entire nation's market from one

you could digitally broadcast over shortwave. You could literally cover an entire nation's market from one source. And being fairly central like you are, you could easily cover central Canada.

KOKF: That's an incredible idea! I'm going to have to kick that one around.

ACMJ: Part of the problem is that there is no market because there is no perceived market. The people that are there don't even know that the music exists, so they're not going to ask for it, so no one is going to play it for them, so record companies have no market for their product...no one knows it exists.

KOKF: That's exactly right. We did a study a while back with Mardell's, which is the leading Christian music retailer here in Oklahoma City. They are regional and have stuff all over the general area, but they have six stores here in Oklahoma City. We sat down



14002 Linden Ave N Seattle, WA 98133

with their people at the different stores, and talked with their national buyer looking at the profile of music they're selling. If you know about the music that's selling, usually praise and worship is number one by a mile. As far as general categories go, it breaks down like that. Here in Oklahoma City, almost 60% of their total music sales in the last three years have been in rock, heavy metal, and what we'd probably call chr. It's totally upside down compared to their stores everywhere else. So, there is an impact here. Albums have been available to the secular market at Sound Wherehouse and some of these other places. They've found out who we were and they call us about stocking extra copies of stuff because people go in there. So many of our listeners never set foot in a Christian bookstore and would wonder why you go to a bookstore to buy music...would have no idea, no concept of that. One of the wild stories is when White Cross first hit with their very first album on Pure Metal, Sound Wherehouse started getting people in wanting it. They tried to find out where they were hearing it, so they called us and we talked and they started stocking White Cross. In a store like that, they depend on fast moving product, they're not going to stock anything that moves slow. We checked some of their stores, and they were stocking as many as twelve copies of WhiteCross' original album. That was really unusual. Usually they've four orfive...sixinaslot. Butthey found out that when we get on something and its hot, they'd better get stocked up, because people are going to buy it. There's been a tremendous impact as far as musical sales are concerned. You've probably heard these stories. We have a wonderful time with some of these record labels, because we're not playing what they want us to play.

ACMJ: Kevin Allison's paper The Pure Rock Report has mentioned that before...about labels complaining their singles are passed over for the other

album cuts.

from here?

KOKF: (Greg laughs) Reunion told us, well...if you're not going to play what we release, just don't play any Reunion product at all. (Everyone

ACMJ: Then they won't pick up Renee Garcia's album, or really work with it, because it's too aggressive. That's the impression I'm getting.

KOKF: That is really the old ostrich with his head in the sand.

ACMJ: Well, is there anything else you can think of? A closing note to summarize where things are going

KOKF: Something I haven't mentioned is the way we present the music...I think it is very important. You can have all the right cuts, but they have to be presented right. One thing that bothered me when I heard tapes of Christian hit radio stations, they still had their little five minute teaching things, like Larry Burkett, in the format. They had their scripture verse of the hour...their power verse of the hour. If their target is the Christian kid, that's fine. That's nice. But they have all of this Christian happy talk. We don'thavethat...we'remusic. Wedon't have those special programs, and we don't have a lot of what I call Christian happytalk. We present it as a hit music radio station. Except for the heavy metal. The metal is delivered as an underground pilot radio station. There's no hype, no jingle...it's very laid back, just music... But apart from that, our format is pretty much hyped, high-energy top 40 and delivered as such. We present a scripture that may apply to a human need, such as somebody struggling with lust. We'll grab a piece of scripture from the NIV or Living Bible and lay that into the intro of a song.

It's more applied ACMJ: Christianity then...more relevant.

KOKF: We let the Word speak for itself. We're not giving opinions; saying, well here's how my day went. We're not saying anything other than what the Word says applied to a

specific situation. It may relate to the song you're going into, or it may not. The point is that, for a mainstream secular listener, you're going along listening to this thing, and whatever we say, you're going to hang in there with us, because there's a good beat and you know the songs. You're not being preached at.

ACMJ: What most kids are getting, though, is just the opposite of that.

KOKF: It's very important that it be handled that way. We also look at what we call programmed learning or attitude action learning. We use a pattern of messages that support each other and support what the Bible has to say. We are number one in the market in total daily time spent listening by teens, and we're number two in 18-34. We have a very long listening day with our target listeners, so we use that to good advantage. For example, avoiding pre-marital sex if we address that particular subject - always a hot topic. Some of the target songs will lookata guy saying no to a girl, or a girl saying no to a guy, or dealing with resisting peer pressure to perform sexually...thingslike that. For example, Temptation by Painted Orange, Fantasy by the Dynamic Twins, True Love Always by Steve Arrington, About Sex by Jacob's Trouble. We've got some oldie recurrent tracks, If You Don't Like It by Judson Spence, Much Too Much by Talking Drums, and Young Boy, Young Girl by Rick Cua and Rebecca Sparks.

ACMJ: That's quite a line-up of songs right there.

KOKF: You wouldn't hear them all back to back; they'd be programmed systematically throughout the period of say, three to four hours...realizing that we have a long listenership with these folks. You might hear one piece of scripture that would address lust or a Godly kind of love going into one of those songs

ACMJ: Have you ever gone as far back as Kaja?

KOKF: Kaja is still very big. We still get a lot of requests for Kaja. That's a timeless, classic sound. Eventually we see that coming out in a lot of kids that we talk with, because really God watchesoveras we perform it...it won't turn void. It works; it'll pile up in a persons life and change their attitude, and eventually for a lot of kids it changes their actions. 'It's constantly there. Those are a couple of very important things One of the reasons we're effective is because of the things we don't do and don't say. And, another reason why we're so effective is due to what wedosay and how we say it ... and how we program it.

ACMJ: What you are, then, is an alternative to the standard radio fare...and what you're not is just the standard Christian radio station that heaves out a lot of good feelings, happy

talk and sleepy music. KOKF: We're there with you. You can trust us. Everybody that we deal with explicitly trusts us. It's really interesting, because we're almost unclassifiable, right now. We're in between. We're not really a Christian station, and we're not really a secular station. For the Birch ratings ... we explained everything ... wrote out exactly what we're doing and who we are. When we got their mailing back a year-and-a-half ago, they'd reclassified us as mainstream chr. They'd dropped any connotations of us as being religious or Christian. Though we are very much Christoriented; we don't ever say we are Christians on the air. But we are Christianity in action on the air. Jesus didn't go around the place saying, "I am the Messiah, I'm speaking up on the grass hill at seven. Bethere." That's not the way He worked, that's not the way we work on the air. We have stationary we use for mailing to churches and other people that identifies us as a Christian radio station, and admit to that wholeheartedly, but on the air where we are fishing on that mainstream pond, so to speak, we never ever claim to be a Christian radio station. We just are.



ACMJ: What reasoning had you behind the name, Dig Hay Zoose? What's the background on that?

DHZ: Well, the way it happened...the way we named the group is we'd been trying to figure out a name for, well, three or four weeks. We were just trying to think of names, period. The group hadn't really been a group at that time. Then two weeks after the group had started, Phil and I, and a friend of mine, Pat, were sitting around in my room. We were just doodling around, and drawing and stuff. We were trying to think of a name for the band and we couldn't come up with anything. We had just gotten done saying, "Well, we know that when we hear something we like. It'll just hit us, and that'll be it." So we just slipped into Spanish accents or something, being silly, you know...The Monty Python thing...I guess. All of sudden, I said, "You know? I really dig Jesus!" Phil looked at me, I looked at him, and I said, "that's it." That's just how it was.

ACMJ: The songs are very diverse. Some have a thrash and funk feel; one even has Led Zeppelin overtones. Is this what we can we expect from you long term, or are you trying

to find your direction musically?

DHZ: Musically, I think we'll always remain diverse, just because the band is that way. We've all played in different bands. I played with my family, who had a country gospel group for 8 years. I played with them for a long time. That's how I learned, busically, to play bass. There are eight kids in our family, and my brothers and sisters all listen to

different things. So I got a good dose of everything. Phil, going to college and all, just always liked to listen to different music. different members bringing different elements of things. That's pretty much how we became diverse. I would say we're going to remain that and probably diversity, but it will have direction. Sometimes we don't feel like we have direction. But as we grow tighter as a musical unit, things will continue to be diverse and probably get stranger, if anything. I imagine

ACMJ: So, how would you describes yourselves as a hand? How would you describe the styles that you have on this disc?

DHZ: Some have called it musical vomit, just because there's a little bit of everything that you've eaten that day. For a while, we were calling it musical gumbo, because there's a little bit of everything. If I were going to call it anything, I'd just call it music that everyone should like.

ACMJ: Have your families been supportive of your music direction?

DHZ. Yeah, my family is really supportive. They're really happy with the way things have been happening. My Moin really likes it a lot, which surprises me. And my Dad has heard just a little list, but he's real supportive. He's coming to the show Friday, as a matter of fact, but it's a thing where they say, "it may not be the type of above that we like to listen to but we're glad that you guys are doing what you're doing." But, as far as parents of the band, for the most part they've all been supportive.

ACMJ: What is something unique that your band has to offer?

DHZ: The things that strike me about the band is just the fact that nothing that we put on the record, none of it's fluft. And I find that with a lot of bands, both. Christian and non-Christian bands, there's a lot of fluff out there. Doing things for doing things' sake. We take what we're doing seriously, but not so seriously that we can't take criticism. We cristic what we create because it's art. Three of us in the band paint or draw. We're involved in other things besides music, just all kinds of different art – whether it be painting, acting, or whatever.

ACMJr Music, then, is just one outlet for that?

DHZ: Yeah, everything just kinda channels around, and circles into our music as far as the visual and everything. And on stage and five, people get more of a feel for what we do visually according to the control of the control

and what 'we're about that way too.

ACMJ: Is this your first go at it, or have you released somethings on your own before?

DHZ: As far as albums, I think this is really it for all of us, some of the other guys have been in a thrash band and released a demo, and the country band I was in recorded two albums, but they were for a pretty small label, so it wasn't anything extravagant. As far as any big label kind of thing, where it's getting distribution and we don't have to hand it to people ourselves, this is it for all of us.

ACMJ: Listening to the disc, it obviously is extremely well-suited for mainstream college radio. What are you going to do to get your music into that market?

DHZ: We've been discussing that, actually, and we're not really sure how to go about doing that. I know that our manager has been talking it up as far as that is concerned. The label definitely wants to do something there, but its almost as if there's a vortexx of knowledge that nobody knows exactly how to go about it. It's like nobody's answered the question of how to go about college distribution. We'd like to say the label's going to send it to every college on the map, but you know that's wishing for a lot...

ACMJ: Are you thinking along the line of doing some shows at universities?

DHZ: Actually, that's kind of a goal for us. One of the things about booking agents, we're looking at connections

as far as colleges are concerned. Two of us are in college and in that mindset.

ACMJ: Is finding a good booking agent about as hard (and with just as many strings attached) as finding a good record label?

DHZ: Yeah...pretty much. You can only go on what people say, and it's hard to trust everybody, especially the people you can't see. We end up talking to a lot of them on the phone, because we don't live on the coast either way.

ACMJ: What led you to sign with Brainstorm?

DHZ: Well...we just felt Brainstorm had a lot of integrity before us, as far as artists that had been on the label. We felt that the label was artist-oriented...that they cared about what the artists thought. And they promised they'd order pizza every night that we were in the studio, so of course, that was the clincher right there. That pretty much iced the deal for us. Yep. Pizza, and a television.

ACMJ: What is there that you would really like people to know about Dig Hay Zoose?

DHZ: Well, what I'd really like people to know about Dig Hay Zoose is that three of the members are single and currently looking for very...well actually, (another band member says in the background, "I'm happy.")...he's happy...so, two of the members are currently looking for beautiful women.

ACMJ: Do you need photos?

DHZ: Well, we're not really a groupie type band. Actually, we're really nice guys. We know how it is to be hurt. So, we wouldn't want groupies, 'cause then that would be just kind of a sadness thing. We're all young guys. I guess that's the serious thing that I'd like to get across to people—the youth of the band. Just the fact that, even though we're young, we've been through a lot individually and together. Maybe that comes across in the lyrics and music, I don't know. I feel like alot of the time, when you go places or you're working with someone, and they happen to be twice your age, they tend to underrate your ability—creatively and musically. We'd like to prove some people wrong.

ACMJ: Listening to your music; it sounds like you grew up in inner-city New York or the rougher areas in L.A., but you're in Kansas City. What is there in the Midwest that has shaped and molded you to be where you are?

DHZ: Well, just the fact that we're different. We're not like the mainstream people here. I think we'd be much more suited to live on the coast, when we were there, we liked it and everything. But as far as our looks, our attitude and things, well, there is a lot of bias and recism here that people tend to underrate. For instance, I have a friend who's black and I have long hair. When we go to the mall, we automatically get stares and we've been run off the road before and things like that. I mean, that doesn't happen in L.A., and that doesn't happen in New York. It's just a totally different thing, but just as dangerous and maybe in scarier ways.

ACMJ: So, there are elements of racism and that sort of thing. That's coming through in the songs, that's an influerace?

DHZ: Yeals. In fact, we're working on material for the next album and that's something that's really been heavy on our hearts lately. It may sound really cliche, but I think the way we handle it will be different than the way most people talk about it.

ACMJ: Where do you think the church needs to be in all of this?

DHZ: Around here, the KKK seems to think that their way is righteous and that it's the Christian way, which is definitely wrong. Alot of the churches are actually guilty of racism, especially in the middle of the bible belt and in the Midwest. It may not be so at the churches that we go to, I don't know. My church has been really open and supportive of the things that I've done. Even though I have long hair, it's cool with them. Which is kind of a surprise, because alot of people are older than 60,...there's alot of older people there. As farms the church's position on racism, the people amound here gost norm to be in the mindset that black people, and Mesis are and people with long hair...are bad. I think that churches need to wake up and smell the coffee concerning that and alist of other things.

ACMJ: What direction do you see the band taking in the coming months?

DHZ: I see the next altum being longer, and it being a more involved process. I hope we get a lot more time to record it. It seemed like a lot of decisions were made on the spur of the moment. We signed the contract with them just a week-a-half before we flew out there to record the album. It was all just really kind of weird. As far as musical direction, I think I'm going to hand the phone over to Dave, cause this is something that he wants to talk about.

DHZ: The way I see it, what we're doing right now is trying to improve upon what we've already done...because we were rushed a bit...because we didn't get to make all the decisions ourselves. We are really pushing to put more work and thought into what we do,...to put our whole effort and soul into what we've done already. It's a learning experience. You know, you're done with the first album and you look at it and say, 'well, could I have done better?' That's what we intend to do with the next one. Musically, I don't know. Just whatever styles influence us at the time.

ACMJ: What has influenced you up 'til now?

DHZ: I guess each member has been influenced by different things, but mainly bands along the lines of Jane's Addiction, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Fishbone, Crowded House - basically anything that is on the alternative edge. When were talking at Cornerstone, the thing we find about any of the conclusions drawn between us and Scaterd Few is that we both derive our musical sound the same way whatever influences us, we put in our music.

ACMJ: Did you limit your search, as far as labels go, to the Christian music industry, or did you venture outside of that?

DHZ: We really didn't. We decided collectively that we wanted to sign to a Christian label. We really didn't look outside at all.

ACMJ: What sort of support do you see ahead, as far as Christian radio is concerned? Do you see much there?

DHZ: I think I do. I think we could pull some support there. Because the album is diversified. It has completely alternative stuff, and it also has a commercial edge to some of the songs - because that's another influence. I hate to say that all music played on the radio is commercial, but for the most part it is. On the college field, on college radio stations and such, we should be able to pull some weight, (laugh) we'll see.

ACMJ: Give me an idea of your background, just as an idividual. How'd you end up where you are now?

DHZ: Just me, Dave? ACMJ: Just you, Dave.

in the band.

DHZ: I've just always been inspired to play music. I decided one day I was going to play guitar, and I had no money or anything...this is an old story. But, I had no money. I prayed that night that I could get a guitar...that I could run into one. And the next Sunday, a lady at church offered me one. So from then on, I pretty much set my mind that this is what God's will is in my life was...to play guitar for some sort of band in the future. So I started playing and wound up in D.O.N. as a first band. I don't know if you've ever heard of them, it was a hard-core punk band. We played a lot of shows with a band called Hot Pink Turtle. I'd never really ventured into that field of music much, but there was so much more power in the alternative metal scene...so much appeal to draw more people to listen to what you have to say. That's my turning point. From that point on, I decided that I definitely wasn't cut out to play hard-core anymore...that it was a dying trend. I dropped out, and eventually joined Dig Hay Zoose. This is where lyrically, I

ACMJ: Do you feel you get a lot of support from the Christian community there, as far as the shows you do, and the way you're trying to reach kids. Do you feel there's a lot of support there, or are there still a few people who wonder about what you're doing?

want it to be. And, I think that's the way it is for everyone

DHZ: Here in Missouri, there are a lot of leery churches. There are a lot of people that'll say they want to start something with heavy metal to draw a crowd, but they really don't know anything about what's going on. It might be the same way there. We get that alot. As far as support from churches, really the churches in Missouri don't want to support the movement alot. There are a few. We're part of an organization that gives a line of contact from all the bands that play in Kansas City (Christian rock bands, rap bands, metal bands, whatever they are), and through that we draw support from each other. But, from the churches really...no. They're really not interested in changing their mindset.

ACMJ: What do you think the church could do to help provide you with avenues and ways of reaching kids that really aren't interested in the church? Alot of kids don't feel that church has anything to offer them, and obviously you do, or you wouldn't be doing what you're doing. What is it the church can do to help you (and other bands) to convince kids that the church could really have something valid to offer them?

DHZ: I think they should step out and give it a chance. I don't think they should keep their mindset when they really don't know what they're talking about a lot of times, the mindset that rock 'n roll is evil, and since it's evil we can't use it, its a dead tool. Its Satan's tool...whatever they believe. Telling kids that who are into Iron Maiden doesn't do them any good. That doesn't get them interested at all. If the churches could unite in the area, getting over their denominational differences, we could unite and rent a theatre toria night. Have bands play, have pastors there and have the Word of God be spoken, and preach between shows. There would be power in something like that. But.

ACMJ: You don't we that happening right now?

DHZ: Honestly, no. I hate to be cynical about it, but honestly I don't. Because traditional religion has been planted here in Missouri. It's really hand to get out of it. You have to step out of it to take a look at it and see the truth, and the truth is - what really matters? Does the length of your hair matter? Or, is that something to draw a denominational difference.

ACMJ: What got you to the point where you are now? What's made you want to pursue this?

DHZ: I started playing when I was seven years old, and took lessons until I was 13 or 14. That's the very beginning of the musical ties; I never learned how to sight-read, because I'd pick it up by ear. The teacher would play what I was supposed to play, and I'd pick it up by ear. I never learned. My next door neighbor all through school, Dion Tyler, plays bass for a band called Hot Pink Turtle, which is also an alternative Christian metal funk band around here He's my best friend, and we started out in the very first band we played together. I played drums, because I played drums in school for the marching band and stuff like that. When I started, it just got in my blood and I couldn't help it anymore. I wanted to play music. And I've always sang, to myself, in church and in choir, I was a vocal major for a year at Northwest Missouri State. But, I just never got around to singing in a band until after D.O.N. broke up. I sang for this gothic, metal band called Chancelis... and it turned out our drummer played for

Chancelis, too. And we needed a bass player, so Bill joined up...so there's three of our members there. The guitarist for that band was in control of the music, and we didn't mind, because it was like his band. But we decided that Bill, myself, and Jimmy (which is three-fourths of Dig Hay Zoose)...we didn't want to play that gothic metal thing. We prayed about it and had a meeting, and went our separate ways. We were looking for a guitarist and Dave was there. So we called Dave and started jammin' together...that's how we got together. But that's kinda how everything fell together. We were all intertwined in different bands.

ACMJ: Do you have any advice for a band just getting

DHZ: Yeah, the biggest thing is: do not pick one little style and then try to fit your lifestyle into that. I've seen so many bands die because they say, "we're going to be a heavy metal band now" or, "we're going to be a ...," you know. They pick a style and they try to wedge everything into this little thing. Bands should write from where they come from...there're so many Jesus saves songs, and so many suicide songs, and there're so many abortion songs - just forget about that stuff, its all been covered before. Write about your life. Write about what you're going through, and what's God helping you get through. That's what we do. Also, write with emotion and write with your heart. Don't limit yourself. Don't think that you can't, ... don't ever say, "oh we can't play that, it's too weird," or "it doesn't say Jesus every fourth word."

ACMJ: You were saying the songs are basically an extension of your own life, things you've struggled with. Is there anything in the songs that are really near and dear to your heart?

DHZ: I'd really have to think through the whole thing. There's a lot of stuff that really hits homes at different times in my life. When you're faced with somebody who doesn't really look at the whole picture or, like a lot of my friends at school, don't believe in any God at all. Or they're following Buddhism, into ystals, and that stuff. [The songs] all just come into place at different times of your life. Like when you get really depressed and you're thinking, "man, I just really messed up, I should have done this, and I haven't done that, and I've put things off, and put this off." That's what Struggle Fish is all about. You keep procrastinating about stuff you have to do and haven't done. Different songs mean different things to me at different times in my life.

ACMJ: So, its an ongoing thing for you?

DHZ: Yeah, they change. Think About It and Struggle Fish are closer to me (because I wrote them) lyrically. But when Bill writes, it's just as close to me...and when Dave writes. We write together, and we think a lot a like. It just fits together, and we all feed off of our own music - it really expresses how we feel.

ACMJ: Do you you mentioned that a lot of the people around you don't really feel that church has much to offer them, and obviously you do. How do you, I mean, outside of the music, how do you go about convincing them that it

DHZ: First of all, you have to get rid of alot of the stereotypes that people have created. Just drop the thought that, when you become a Christian, you become this separate society. When you become a Christian, God has made you a certain way, to serve a certain purpose. If you go changing your personality and where you're at and all your friends, then you redefeating His purpose for you. There's no reason why you should clumps your sense of humor, your personality, the way you work. Just follow His rules and do what He wants you to do. People put miss how much freedom there is in Christianity, because our sins are orgiven. It's not this thing where your have to stress out Him and say, "God I'm sorry, please torgive tre." Jesus loves you so much that He does. I'm not trying to say that you secome a Christian and you're okay and you can do the same things you did. Because, when you really find out how great Christianity is, things change in your life. You don't really care about things you used to care about, and stuff that you would never even consider doing before, now it's just part of your normal daily thing. But, I think the biggest thing is to break the stereotypes...that when you become a Christian, you have to do this ... you have to do this, you have to do this, you can't do this and you can't do this. Instead of a constricting thing, it has to be a freeing thing.

ACMJ: Do you find people trying to put you into molds

DHZ: Well, I think people do that just to help themselves...process the information, you know? You put something in a category so its easier to deal with. You don't have to get into all the details. But yeah, sometimes you catch people thinking that's just one of those rock

and all that kind of thing. It doesn't really bother me, because I know that's just some people's way of dealing with things?

ACMJ: Are you pretty available to do shows, if someone were interested in having you come do something?

DHZ: We're ready to go; we're chomping at the bit, really!

ACMJ: What would it take to make that

DHZ: We're looking at different booking agents and all. After a while, hopefully we'll have things set up. Our biggest problem is that we're all totally broke. Seriously, we are totally and completely broke! And the problem would probably be transportation. We've got vehicles, but it's going to be hard. We could never do a show that doesn't have a P.A., because we don't have a P.A. and have nothing to carry it in. But, if everything works out, then yeah - we're ready to go. We'll go play anywhere. Its kind of a clicke line: it takes money to make money. We just have absolutely nothing, no mikes, no P.A. But I think once we get things rolling, it'll

be a lot easier to come play different places.

ACMJ: So, you're taking a class in college now? DHZ: I'm taking a biology class right now. It's a five hour

ACMJ: What else do you do? DHZ: I work too. We all work.

ACMJ: What type of jobs do you all have? DHZ: I work at Citibank...Visa and Mastercard. Dave works at Hallmark full-time. He works nightshift. Bill works with his Dad; his Dad's in construction. Jimmy'll be working here pretty soon; he's gonna have two jobs. He's got a wife and kid. Jimmy's 22 and he has an almost 2 year old son, Ashton. He's got quite a bit of responsibility. Everybody else is pretty much freed up to go, whenever we can. Jim has talked about it with his wife and everything is working out as far as I know.

ACMJ: Is this something you would like to pursue full-time then?

DHZ: Definitely. I'd love to do this full-time. Really. would. And I think we have a lot of potential to crossover to do the secular market, the way things are going. That's what I really hope to do to cross over into the secular market. It's the people who are not Christians who need to hear what we have to say

ACMJ: And, you're still trying to figure out the best way to take your music into the cislings. mainstream

DHZ: Exactly. What fill was talking about. We're still working to see what we can do. But, it'll all come in time. We'll all work it out, just keep it in prayer Things'll work. My main testimony life is the worked through this band. We've been together barely a year, but we already recorded an album. It's just amazing how He works! I don't understand sometimes, He really baffles me. But 1 know 1.1. Him.



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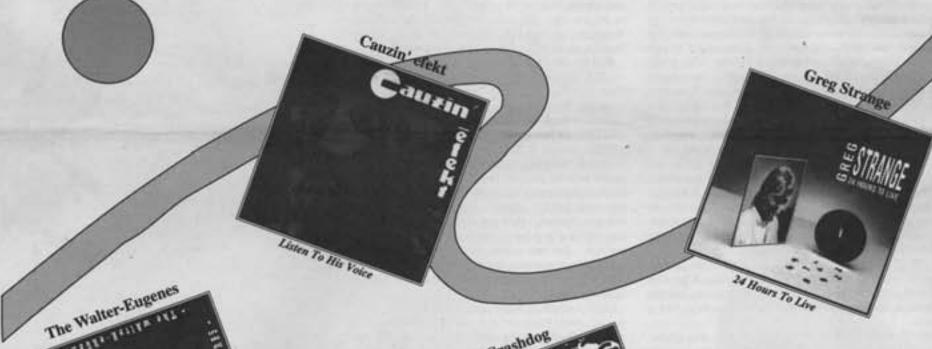


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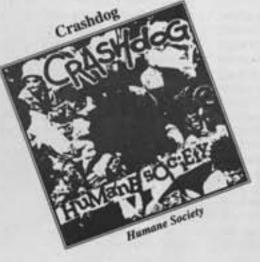


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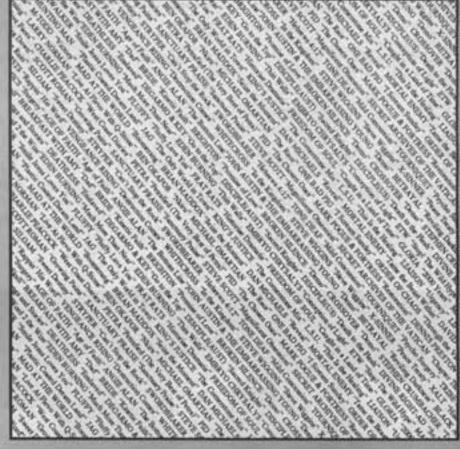
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## CODE OF ETHI



COE: When Code of Ethics started five years ago, it was just myself. I was living in Michigan at the time where my Father was a minister of a church. That's where I spent about 21 years of my life growing up. All my influences were there. I wrote and recorded ten songs but it didn't really go anywhere. I didn't have connections or anything like that to push it, and the material wasn't recorded very well, so it didn't get very far. I was all by myself without any kind of help, so I just let it go and started writing again. I'd packaged it up and everything - made it look like a decent demo - but it just didn't go anywhere. We moved about a year after that first demo to Florida, where my Father took another church down here. I met Eric at that time. I had already started on a second demo, another ten song demo. Eric helped on a couple of songs on the second tape. Then the entire year we shopped it to record companies, but didn't get real good response. It was just okay. Actually, I was really disappointed at some of the responses. It just didn't seem like we were getting anywhere. I wasn't sure if it was the material or what...

ACMJ: What sort of response were they giving you?

COE: Well, people liked it. But some of the Christian record labels, to be honest with you, just strung us along. They told us that it was really cool and they wanted to do something with it...that they heard good potential. They would say to send more material and keep stringing us along. We didn't play out or anything...it was just the two of us. So over the course of that year, we basically shopped the tape and sat around, which was not a good thing to do. On the third demo I had decided to go ahead. I was more influenced by keyboards (even more on the third demo), bought some new equipment, and decided this was the last demo I was going to do. I was really sincere about it and I prayed about it. I told the Lord this is it, I'm tapped out financially, because it's so expensive. I'm going to go in, do it 24-track, and lay all the tracks down. I'd come up with some material that I thought was really cool this time. So I went ahead into the studio and laid down some songs that I had written. I thought this time it sounded really decent. I went into a fairly good recording studio, actually a church basement, and laid it all down professionally. I packaged up the whole demo and made it look really decent. Then I sent it off to about six different record companies. The first that called back was R.E.X., and I just built a really good relationship with them really quickly. They just seemed to have a lot of potential with what I wanted to do, and we just worked out a really good working relationship. We went from there and started the record deal. In the meantime, Eric and I decided to go ahead and form a band and start playing out live, so we went ahead and started booking. I got a fulltime manager who is a friend of mine from Michigan. He was really interested in the Christian music field and had done quite a bit of work in it before (not managing bands, but just doing other things). He moved down to Florida about four months ago just after we'd signed the record deal and started working fulltime as the manager. We started playing out immediately after the demo tape was finished, even before we got the record deal, which was cool. So, since the record deal we stay pretty busy with our gigs and playing live.

ACMJ: What sort of venues are you playing?

COE: Well...we play some secular gigs. In fact, this weekend we're playing downtown at a big art festival called Arts Mania. It's a big festival they have every year. They've asked us to come down and headline it and play on the main stage which is real cool. And that's all secular. I don't do a whole lot of talking when I do secular gigs, I let the music do more of the talking. We 're also doing churches, which were the first concerts we ever started playing. The first were really cheap, but now we've started to pick up and do some clubs, a few secular clubs, and we've booked quite a few Christian clubs, which is really cool. That seems to be the real in thing now. Christian dance clubs are starting to pick up, which really helps us a lot since we're doing dance music. We've booked quite a few Christian colleges and we're going to be going on a tour now in November, so...it looks like probably our mainstay is going to be Christian colleges and clubs. So far we've been received well; I haven't really heard anything negative. They know it's Christian music. When we go to book secular colleges or any kind of secular venue, we don't tell them that we're a Christian band. After they listen to the tape, of course, some of them, actually most of them, know that we are promoting Christian ethics. I think there seems to be these days some sort of a need for morals. And it just seems like they accept it really well, you know, Code of Ethics. We don't bash people over the head with Bibles. I know that there are a lot of older groups that feel you need to have an alter call, and you have to preach the Word - like a pulpit in a way. We feel, especially with alternative music, that doing that really turns off the alternative crowd in the clubs and things like that. I think they want to hear it in the lyrics and in the music. I think they want to hear good ethics and morals, but they don't want to be bashed over the head with Bibles. They don't want you to come out and say God Jesus every few words. Yet inside their heart they really do want to hear it, and I think they appreciate it. They appreciate having a group out there that will bring it to them. Anyway, so far we've had really good response getting into secular colleges and places like that. I'm sure at some point we'll run up against a wall somewhere, because they're really anti-God, but so far it's been pretty well received.

ACMJ: What do you hope to accomplish over the next couple of years with your shows and with your music in the stores?

COE: Well, one of the main things that I would like to see happen is alternative music being brought into the mainstream of Christian music. I always felt that the Christian record companies always told us what we could listen to, and would only give us a certain small selection of music. That was one thing that really aggravated me as a Christian listener. It made the supply of groups very, very limited. And they were handpicked groups, I think. Alot of the groups just weren't reall aggressive, lyrically or musically. I don't think that alot of bands were really up to the technology that maybe they should've been. What we're trying to do is add today's technology...we hope to stay up with the times musically. It seems that Christian music is 3-5 years behind schedule. We want to stay right on top of things, musically, that are going on. And to always provide a good moral background for our listeners. We'd really like to see alternative music go into the mainstream. Our music is more...maybe pop oriented. That probably comes from some of my background. Before I was saved, I played in clubs quite a bit. Alot of the pop, I think, influenced some of the writing. So, although it's alternative music, its got a crossover pop feel to it. Hopefully we're going to grab some mainstream listeners. It may open up a lot of doors for other alternative bands which is really what I'd like to see in the future.

ACMJ: You think of yourselves primarily as a dance band with a Christian emphasis?

COE: Definitely. Hovedance music. Our first two demos were not quite as dance oriented, really. We weren't exactly sure where we were fitting in. I was really influenced by Peter Murphy, and more guitar-oriented types of alternative music. What I really really always wanted was to get into the dance groove, because that's what I really like the most - dance-type music. That's where I really see Code of Ethics going at least for the next three albums. For two to three albums it's going to be really dance-oriented music. It always seemed to me that when I went to Christian concerts over the last couple years that people were just starving for dance music. Everytime somebody would play a song that you could dance to, the crowd would always get into it and get involved right away. I thought the best way to get a message to a crowd was through dance music and that was the type of music that I liked the most

ACMJ: How does this go over with your Father, being a pastor... you being a preacher's kid?

COE: For years, I grew up in a pretty staunch hardcore Baptist home. And, so I grew up feeling that there was no Christian music. That is was wrong...drums were evil. I started on drums when I was a little kid and then I moved into guitar. I was always taught that these instruments were wrong...that they couldn't be used for the Lord's glory. That was just one of the stupid ideologies that we were taught. I ended up really rebelling, because I loved music so much. I just rebelled and felt, well . the only place for me to play was in the world. So I was using my talent, but I wasn't using it for the Lord. Finally, through different events in my life, I was totally brought around through sickness and things the Lord put in my way. It really opened my eyes. I totally named and gave my music to God. 1 actually stopped for about a month when I got out of secular band I was in. I actually stopped music for about a month just to find out if Christian music was even right. Over the course of that month, I really did a lot of soul searching and came to the decision, finally, that it was right and that I was given a talent that I needed to totally use for God. Through the last few years, my Father's really been turned around by the music. In fact, the other night he was listening to the tape, and he told me how much he really appreciated it and liked it and was hoping that it would open a lot of doors for me...that the ministry itself would help other people. He was really excited about it. And that's coming from a really staunch Baptist preacher who used to preach that even Christian rock music was wrong! But, he's just seen the changes that it's brought in my life, and actually seen that it does work. That the Lord can use that type of music just as well as anything. So he's actually pretty excited about the group and the things that we're doing now, but it's taken a long time.

ACMJ: You mentioned that you've got a tour in mind, coming up here in the next couple of months. What's that going to involve?

COE: Well (laughing)...it involves us buying a van and a trailer. packing it up, and hitting the road. We're going to go ahead and go up North and ...let's see ... we're going to Ohio, Illinois(Chicago area), Indiana and Detroit. I'd say that most of our gigs are going to be in the Detroit area...Michigan area actually. We've got a few gigs even all the way up to the U.P. (Upper Peninsula), but most of them are going to be in the Michigan area, a few in Chicago, one or two in Ohio,

ACMJ: You were saying that you were frustrated with the industry somewhat from your dealings with shopping your demo around and from some of the feedback you got...the stringing along. If you could make some changes to the industry, what are a couple of things you would want to change about it pretty quickly.

COE: I definitely think that the Christian record business is just that. It's just a business. There are very few that are really ministryminded...definitely very few. And you'll find that it's probably just the really small labels. they're the ones who are ministry-oriented. But, for the most part its just a business like anyone else. And it's a cutthroat business a lot of times. The more you get involved, the more you see that there are a lot of problems inside it - internally - in some of the bigger companies. I think they have A&R people who are strictly concerned with whether they're going to make a big killing on it or not. The only reason that a few of these progressive bands now see openings is because these companies are realizing that people are absolutely screaming out for it... that they're going to buy it so much. That's why the doors are opening. It's taken a long time because there are a lot of people out there like myself who've wanted to hear good Christian alternative music, but could never get it. I think they have something like a quota - here a few heavy metal bands, and there a few alternative bands. They have a whole lot of regular contemporary groups...it's almost like they're just filling a quota. And once they have enough, it doesn't matter what you're trying to say, or do, or how good you are. Alot of the time...they just don't care. Like they already have enough of what they want. That was the attitude we got from a lot of the companies. The charge I would like to see would be from inside the company, to the people who actually listen to the music and make the decisions over getting new material and signing tapes. I think sometimes that the listeners are really contemporaryminded people who strictly like the mainstream. They don't step outside that. They don't take risks of any kind in picking up new bands because they're not sure what they are going to do. That's actually where I'd like to see the cliange\_inside the company itself...where they do the listening, the A&R people.

ACMJ: What about radio...do you see any hope there?

COE: Yes and no. I think Christian radio has a long, long, long way to go. Even down here in my area...it's almost like they're cut off sometimes. In fact, the radio station that I listen to (which is a contemporary station) just found out about Steve Taylor, you know? This is a group that's already been off the scene for two years, and they're just finding out about Steve Taylor. Alternative music has always been strongest on college radio, and I think thats where its going to remain unless an alternative band can break through and have something that's real radio play but still remains alternative. And that's where Code of Ethics is trying to go. We're trying to open some doors in that area as far as having a song that will get airplay, but will still remain alternative enough. That's a really hard thing to do...it's a really fine line you have to walk. As far as having a lot of hope for Christian radio, I think it could be a great, great thing if it's done right, but it just seems that so many Christian radio stations are still stuck back in the seventies or eighties, you know? They're just not up on the times. I'm hoping to see a lot more alternative stations open up...or at least programs. It's still just very, very mainstream

ACMJ: What's R.E.X. going to do to put you into mainstream college radio?

COE: Well...that's a good question. Through the Pure Rock Report we've actually gathered quite a few different college radio stations, program directors, and the addresses and all for different college radio stations. Alot of secular colleges also. That's where we're going to aim mainly. And, of course, the Pure Rock Report will distribute the cd's to all of the air stations that they serve. I've been gathering a lot of secular alternative stations and alternative college stations...that's where I'd really like us to see push some of our material. It's hard to say, at this point, whether they'll play them or not, or whether lyrically they may be too strong. I'm not sure. I'm kind of waiting...I'm really anxious to see what will happen, and really hoping it will open some doors. But that remains to be seen. I'm not really sure what Doug's planning to do. I think they're pretty. much just going to send them to college radio stations right now, all the Christian ones and some secular.

ACMJ: Listening through your material...I was wondering if there's any possibility of you putting out a cd single with four or five extended remixes...any chance of something like that?

COE: We played around with it a little bit. We went up to Detroit to mix the album down and played around a little bit while we were there with some remixes. They were really coming out neat, so it really gave me the idea to do that, to go back in. The single they're releasing off of this is not necessarily a dance song. It's called Greater Love. I think it's more for the mainstream radio station. That's their hope also, that it will cross into the mainstream. I would myself like to go back and redo a few songs that are on there, and try to distribute them to some clubs and see if we can get some play like that. There's a song that didn't make it on there,...its a really good dance song called Follow On we're doing live in concert. It didn't make it onto the tape, but we're talking about going back in and remixing some dance mixes and then doing that. Just coming out with one or two songs that are on cd. I hope that works out. We'll probably do that later this year.

ACMJ: If someone went to a school or college and would really like to find some way of getting you there, who would they contact? How would they go about that? What would they be looking at realistically to make something happen?

COE: Well, right now we're doing all of our own bookings. We have several offers from some booking companies to sign with them, but we haven't made a decision because its a real serious decision. You end up signing a long agreement with a booking agent and you want to make sure that the booking agent is really going to do what they say they are going to do, so we haven't jumped into anything yet. Again, we're still doing our own bookings, probably right up until

ACMJ: Finally, what sort of advice do you have for a band doing something similar to what you're doing...not signed to a label of any kind...just doing their own recording and promotion?

COE: I would say the best thing to do...if you're looking for that record deal (if that's the direction you think you should go in)...the best thing at this time is to record yourself 24-track (if you can afford to do it), package it up really nice, and send it to a company, though not necessarily a major label. Alot of times major labels tend to pick up a whole lot of bands and throw a few out to see which ones work. They won't stand behind their bands. I've found it best to find a company that you see putting out really really good music, like R.E.X. Find a smaller label that you think is a really strong label. I think you'll find those are the labels that really stand behind you with advertisement and everything they can possibly do for you. If they really believe in your product, that's what they'll do. A lot of times a major label won't do that. I would definitely recommend for a band shopping for a record label to shop for a smaller independent label, because they're always looking for a great new act to stand behind. And, that's what we did. We shopped around.

Correspondence: 10575 Langsland Court Jacksonville, FL 32257

Booking: Don Wrenn (904) 565-9336.



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