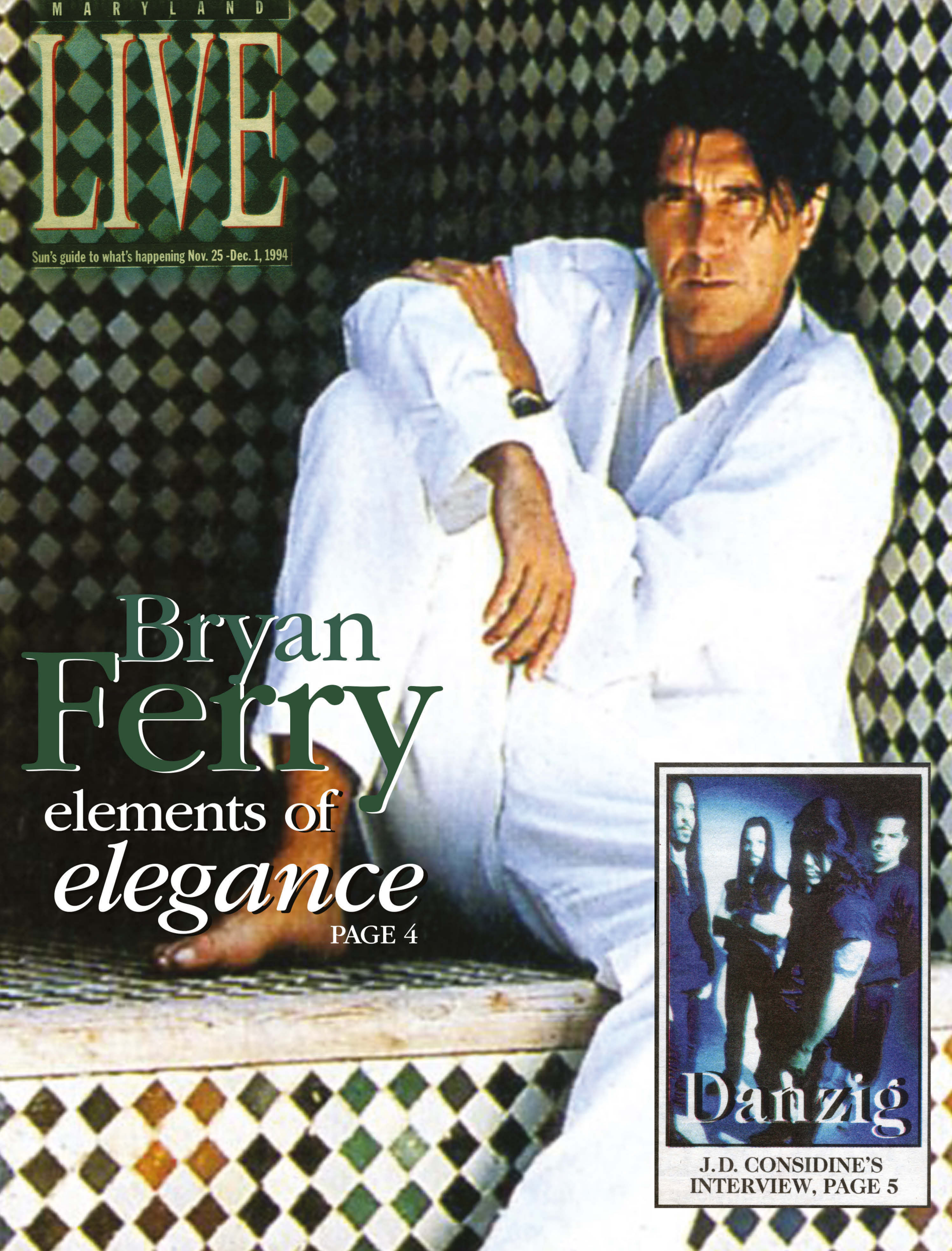


# LIVE

Sun's guide to what's happening Nov. 25 - Dec. 1, 1994



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# Popular **MUSIC**

## Danzig in the spotlight, making music that challenges

*Group walks on the dark side, but says it's often misunderstood*

By J. D. Considine

Sun Pop Music Critic

If the only stuff you know about Danzig is what you've read in magazines, there's a good chance you have the wrong idea about the band.

It isn't just that most of those stories focus on frontman Glenn Danzig's obsession with the dark side, a fascination that is played out in songs with such titles as "Am I Demon," "Snakes of Christ," "Heart of the Devil" and "Until You Call on the Dark." It's hard for any journalist to ignore an angle as tempting as heavy metal and Satanism — even if there isn't anything there to support it.

But as guitarist John Christ explains, there's another side to the story: Glenn Danzig doesn't always come off well in interviews.

"Sometimes he comes off good, and sometimes he comes off like a fool," he says, over the phone from a tour stop in Oklahoma City. "But if you just get into the music and where it's coming from, it gives him a different perspective.

"Glenn maintains that with some people, when you challenge what they believe in, they get afraid of it and make all these crazy accusations," the guitarist adds. "But that's just part of life. Whenever you get music and lyrical content that challenges the norm, you'll get some strong reactions. We're used to it. We're not bothered by it."

Danzig himself seems to thrive on getting people's hackles up. "When he throws in upside-down crosses and imagery like that, some of it's tongue-in-cheek, and some of it's a little more serious," Christ says. "But he usually comes from a different place. People say, 'Aha! Satanism!' and he's like, 'Well, if you look in the Bible, you'll find this imagery spoken about all over the place.'

"That's the confrontation he enjoys."

For his part, Christ stays out of the theological discussions, focusing on the musical end of things. Although Danzig does all the writing, from the words and vocal melody to the basic instrumental ideas, it's Christ who transforms those raw ideas into the sound most fans recognize as Danzig.

"Once the basic idea is there, then I make it Danzig," he says. "I put my stamp on it, and then, boom! There's the sound. By the time it gets into the studio, I'm adding little things here and there to make it more interesting, and to try to make it sound as full as possible.

"That's basically what my role

### Danzig

When: Tuesday, Nov. 29, 8 p.m.  
Where: Michael's 8th Avenue, Glen Burnie  
Tickets: \$17.50  
Call: (410) 768-7901 or (410) 481-7328

is. The guitar parts in Danzig are all very simple. I try to retain the simplicity, but just make it a little more interesting."

How? "One thing we've really liked to do is go from really soft to really loud," he says, offering "The Song of the Morning Star" from the band's current album, "Danzig 4," as an example. "We like the big power that comes in, when everything goes from just really soft to really crashing in."

Still, as much as Christ brings to the Danzig sound, he takes most of his cues from the man himself — even when it comes to solos. "He likes the guitar to scream and talk, with all the string-bending things," Christ says. "Sometimes he's real particular, and other times, he's not. I'll be thinking, 'I could have done that better,' and he's like, 'Fine.'"

Maybe that's why Christ maintains a second career on the side, recording instrumental pieces for TV and movies with an old high school pal named Noel Mason. (Mason, an Australian, was an exchange student at Catonsville High School and lived for a year with Christ's family).

Making music for television can be crazy at times. "We got a little work through a friend at ABC," he says. "She called us one night because she was in a jam — she needed some music to be aired the next day for a Sissy Spacek movie called 'A Place for Annie.'

"I was actually in the studio at the time, recording with Danzig, so Noel was working on it at home while I was in the studio. I came home about 1:30 in the morning, and we finished it up by about 7 that morning. We played it to the producer, they liked it, so we mixed it down and rushed 'em over a DAT, and it was on the air that night.

"It was like, wow," he says, laughing.

Since then, Christ has done more work with Mason for ABC, and he even laid down some guitar tracks for an HBO movie called "Stranger By Night." He hopes that more movie work will come. "I'm working on some soundtrack music at the present time. We're trying to get into some B-flicks and movies, maybe do a little composing when I'm at home."



Danzig will be appearing Tuesday at Michael's 8th Avenue in Glen Burnie.

*"Whenever you get music and lyrical content that challenges the norm, you'll get some strong reactions. We're used to it. We're not bothered by it."*

**Guitarist John Christ of Danzig**

### Dialing for Danzig

To hear excerpts from Danzig's "Danzig 4," call Sundial, The Sun's telephone information service at (410) 783-1800. In Anne Arundel County, call 268-7736; in Harford County, 836-5028; in Carroll County, 848-0338. Using a touch-tone phone, punch in the four-digit code 6247 after you hear the greeting.