

OCTOBER 1994

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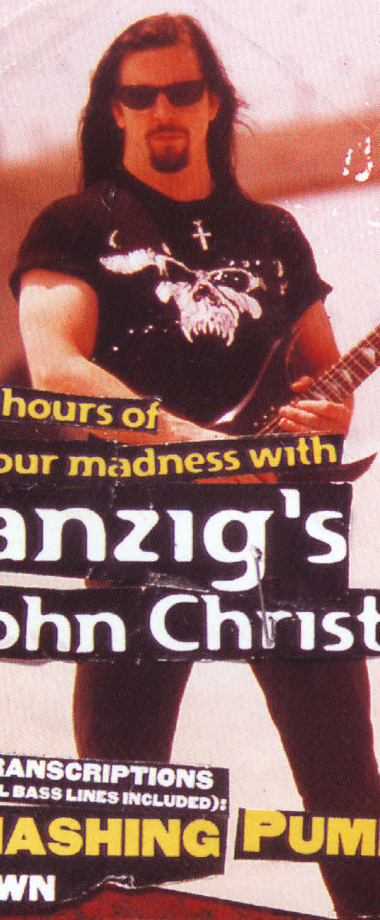
# guitar

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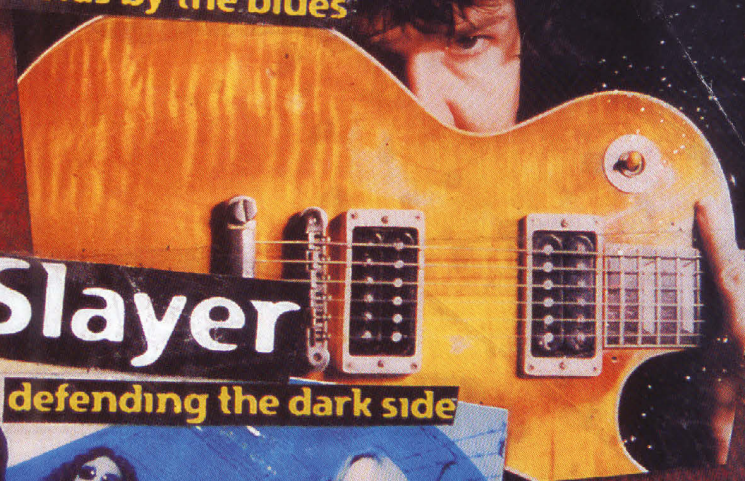


48 hours of pre-tour madness with

**Danzig's John Christ**



**Gary Moore**  
stands by the blues



TRANSCRIPTIONS  
(ALL BASS LINES INCLUDED):

**SMASHING PUMPKINS**

**DROWN**

**VAN HALEN**

**UNCHAINED**

**TEMPLE OF THE DOG**

**PUSHIN' FORWARD BACK**

**CREAM**  
**I FEEL FREE**

**GARY MOORE**  
**SINCE I MET YOU BABY**

**Slayer**

defending the dark side



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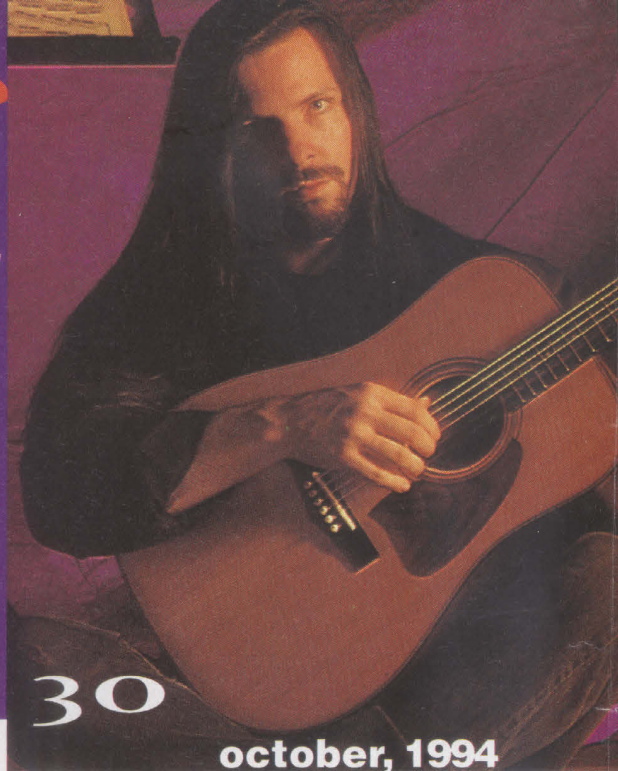
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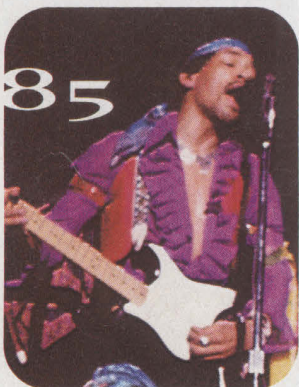
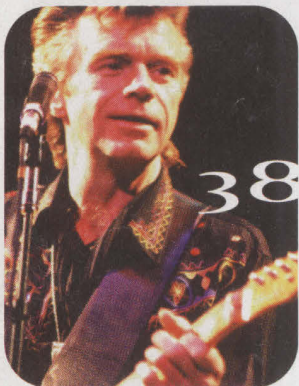
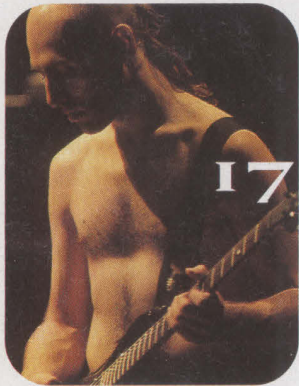
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# 48 Hours in the Life of

## Danzig's John Christ

**May, 1994**—When it was suggested that I write a little ditty about some of my activities that occur in an average 48 hours, I found the idea quite an interesting one. But which two days should I choose? First and foremost, I have no “average” days, only light or insane ones! This year has been full of crazy, two-day spurts of madness. So I’ve decided to focus on the ante and penultimate days before hitting the road with Danzig, touring all summer in support of our forthcoming album *Danzig 4*.

I’ve got a million things to do and time is extremely short. I’m now in a state of near insanity I call “pre-tour mode.” The Danzig summer trek begins with our headlining the Dynamo Festival in Holland on May 22nd for an estimated 100,000 rain-soaked, metal-hungry Hollanders. We return to the States May 23rd to start up the first leg of the Metallica “Shit in the Shed Tour,” appearing in the middle slot on the bill, kicking things off near Buffalo, NY on May 30th.

My days break down into early morning phone calls, some time in the gym, barrages of calls to Hollywood and the valley, then running around doing the business set up by all the calls. In L.A., timing can be everything. In my case, I must plan my errands around the intense traffic created by the infamous January 17th Northridge earthquake. My previous 30-minute commute now takes anywhere from one hour to two hours-plus. When do I eat? While driving, of course!

The hectic days leading up to the tour are filled with interviews and photo shoots for guitar-related publications. One shoot with photo ace Marty Temme took five hours and included two outdoor locations. (We finished at five o’clock—just in time for rush hour!) One morning an interviewer called before 9 a.m. so I just did the interview in bed. In the next week, Marty and I managed to cram in two more quick photo sessions. The sessions themselves were easy; it was getting together to approve the shots that took some slick scheduling.

For about a month Rob Nishida and Mace Bailey of Ibanez have been helping me design and build a custom guitar. We are all excited about the possibilities. Ibanez is the first company to approach me about custom guitars. I had no idea how much time and effort goes into the creation of one guitar—but I do now.

The successful 1993 release of Danzig’s remixed “Mother” has generated tremendous interest in the band. This recent notoriety has made making connections and establishing new relationships (i.e., endorsements—YEAH!!) with musical equipment manufacturers, distributors, and retailers much easier, but very time consuming. Ah, the perks.....

by **John Christ**  
photos by Marty Temme



**Wednesday, May 18th**

**7:00 a.m.**

I get up for a quick breakfast and start dialing Laura at D'Andrea picks regarding an endorsement deal for custom picks for myself and [Danzig bassist] Eerie Von. My guitar tech, Crash (or my Crash tech), got the deal going (huh?). Laura and I had been playing phone tag for a few days but now she was faxing me the contracts ("...so please read, sign, and fax back a.s.a.p."). I waited; the fax didn't come. Hence another round of calls. Okay, success.

My next call is to Bill Fox at Celestion speakers. We're trying to work out the logistics of the purchase, shipping, and destination of nine vintage 30-watt Celestion speakers. By now I'm buddies with his answering service. I leave the address and number of Zounds, a North Jersey rehearsal studio we'll be using the week we have off before starting our tour with Metallica. Next, I phone our tour manager to give him the info and go-ahead to finish the transaction. One more quick message to leave for Terry Dennis of D'Aquisto strings/Spectraflex cables, and I'm off to the gym.

**8:45-10:00 a.m.**

Pump iron and scream from the pain.

**10:30 a.m.**

Call Anthony at Mates Warehouse in North Hollywood about loading Danzig gear from our storage space to his in preparation for shipment by Rocket Cargo to the rehearsal space in New Jersey. I attempt to locate [Danzig drummer Chuck] Biscuits and Eerie to help move gear. Oh well....

Next, I leave a message for Bob Bradshaw (owner and guitar rig meister of Custom Audio Electronics, North Hollywood), telling him that I'll call back at 1 p.m. to see how he's doing with my rig. I receive my daily call from American Recordings' publicity babe

Melissa, confirming a 3 p.m. photo session/interview with the evil Slayer axe-men Kerry King and Jeff Hanneman at their temporary apartment in Burbank.

**11:30 a.m.**

Anthony picks me up at my girlfriend's apartment in the valley. We drive the truck to the storage space. (That's the easy part.) I don't have the code for the security gate; I have to go to the office for a new one. Somehow they had managed to delete my name from the records. I had the key to the locker, but that means *nada*. I had to call our accountants and get them to fax a letter on company stationery giving me permission to enter the unit. It took 20 minutes (not too bad). Then the real fun started. The storage locker was packed to the clouds! Take a guess what was on top... two loaded Ampeg SVT speaker cabinets! We had some serious roadie fun for an hour and a half. (I agree—it does sound odd for the lead guitarist of Danzig to be moving a whole backline around. Don't they pay people to do that sort of thing?????)

**1:30 p.m.**

My Custom Ibanez guitar was to be ready by mid afternoon, so I called Mace, an Ibanez luthier. To my dismay, he told me that the paint wouldn't be dry until tomorrow. That is also when the gear is to be picked up by Rocket Cargo. I make a quick call to Custom Audio Electronics to check on my rig. Bob (Bradshaw) is still working on a Metallica rig, but says he'll get to mine as soon as possible. Now I'm in pre-panic mode. It's two days before we go to Holland to play the biggest show of my life and my rig is in pieces in Bob's shop! Still, I have faith.

**2:00-2:30 p.m.**

I phone my roommate, Noel, to check on how the ABC-TV movie promo music is coming. We've had little over a week to come up with a demo tape of at least six 30-second cues for ABC's promo department. If they like what they hear, we stand to get a fair

bit of future work.

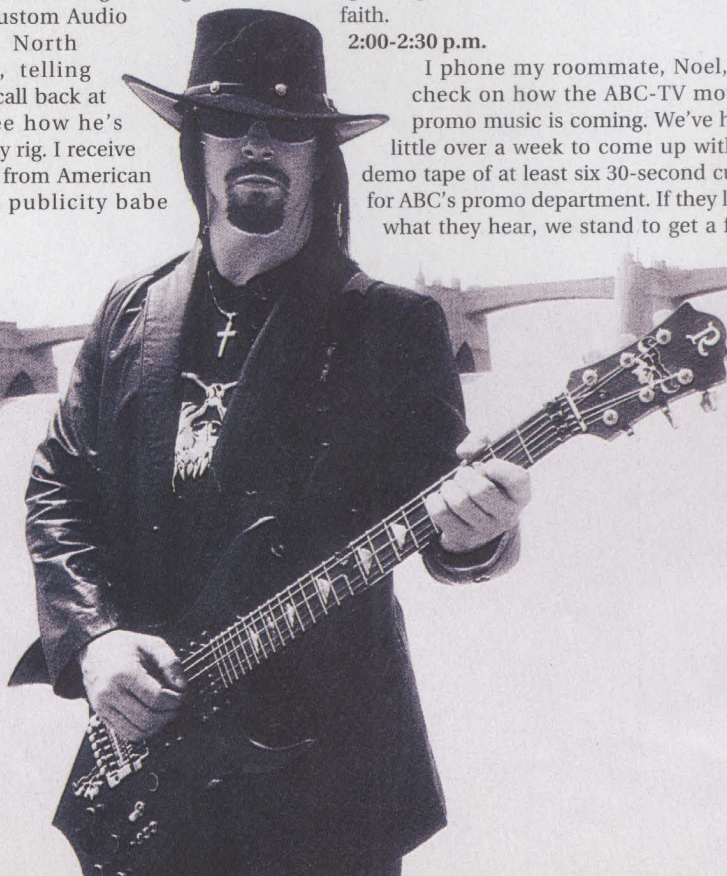
Permit me to digress for a moment. You see, my roommate (a musician as well as a television technical director/producer) and I were asked by an ABC producer to compose a piece of music for a 30-second promotion spot for a made-for-TV movie entitled *A Place for Annie*, starring Sissy Spacek. The producers liked it enough to ask us to do another cue for a Jane Seymour movie, plus one for their May sweeps campaign. (Gotta love those TV royalties!)

**3:00 p.m.**

Miraculously, I show up for the photo session/interview on time with the Ibanez prototype guitar. I get the distinct impression the magazine people hoped I'd bring my B.C. Rich "Rich Bich." Oh well.... "Okay, we're all here—where the #\*&%@ is the photographer?" Someone says, "Just up the hill." Photographers always lie! They know it's the only way to get musicians to stand still long enough to get a good picture. The location is 300 yards up a steep hill, and we're in the hot sun, wearing black, and carrying guitars. There were Jeff, Kerry, and I, the three heavy metal guitar hikers from hell. Being the nice guys that we are, we were only slightly sarcastic and obnoxious to the photographer. Maybe that's why it took nearly 35 minutes to shoot 12 shots. (It couldn't have been us, could it? I don't know. Ask the interviewer, who was guffawing and giggling throughout. Go figure.) Afterwards an entertaining although sometimes slightly too deep interview took place. It was flavored with occasional blasts from the television of anti-Clinton conservatism from Jeff's new hero, Rush Limbaugh. Time was running short. After a couple more quick calls, I concluded my part of the interview and sped off to Hollywood.

**5:30 p.m.**

I arrive at a rinky-dink leather shop to pick up the custom gauntlets I had ordered.



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**john christ**

These were to be the inexpensive final touches to the "evil guitar god" look. Well, the sign on the door said, "Be back at 5." The owner arrived 15 minutes later apologizing in Russian. What do you think happened next? You got it—they didn't fit well. *And* they were both right-handed! You truly do get what you pay for. I'll wear them once and throw them into the crowd.

6:30 p.m.

After fighting rush-hour traffic for 30 minutes on the 101, I arrive at Custom Audio Electronics, starving. Bob had pity on me and we walked down to Little Caesar's for a sandwich. My sandwich caused a 10-minute backup of orders. Bob and I used that time to trade horror stories of guitar gear troubles we'd each had on the road. He had some doozies from his days working with guitarist and longtime friend Steve Lukather. It was an omen.

Back at the shop, we discussed the changes and additions to my rig. The basic setup was unchanged. The major additions were: a Custom Audio Electronics RS-10 programmable stomp-proof pedal board; a (C.A.E.) 4x4 switcher unit; and a half rack space Boss effects unit. Bob showed me how to program the pedal board using the handy MIDI-program mapping functions of my effects units. We then reprogrammed my old presets into the RS-10, and set up some new generic sounds in the Boss unit to get me going. After the payoff (Ouch! You do get what you pay for...), a quick setup procedure briefing, and a short barrage of phone calls, I was off on my final errand of the day (or was it night already?).

10:00 p.m.

At the warehouse Anthony greets me with a tired smile. The poor guy had to unload the truck into the warehouse by himself. We sorted gear according to where it was going and tagged it green for "go," red for "no" (ain't we smart??). I loaded my guitars and put my extra clothes and stuff in my wardrobe case. *Botta-bing!* Finished for the day.

11:00 p.m.

I arrive back at my girlfriend's apartment to an incredible meatloaf dinner with all the trimmings. I barely finish eating before passing out on her couch. (God bless her!)

Thursday, May 19th

8:00 a.m.

I slowly wake and get myself off to the gym. It's my last pre-tour workout. *SHWEET!!!*

10:15 a.m.

It's time to go to Ibanez to pick up my new axe. The guys in the shop give me last-minute pointers about setting up the guitar. Now, of course, we have to take photos of me with the finished product. I call Eerie at the Rock'n'Roll Hyatt on Sunset and let him know I'm running late. The band is meeting there at 11:30 a.m. to depart for the first of

AX2/3.041494

**john christ**

three photo shoots today.

12 noon

Next, it's off to North Hollywood to deliver my guitar to Anthony at the Mates warehouse. Now extremely late, I race toward the Hollywood Hyatt.

12:30 p.m.

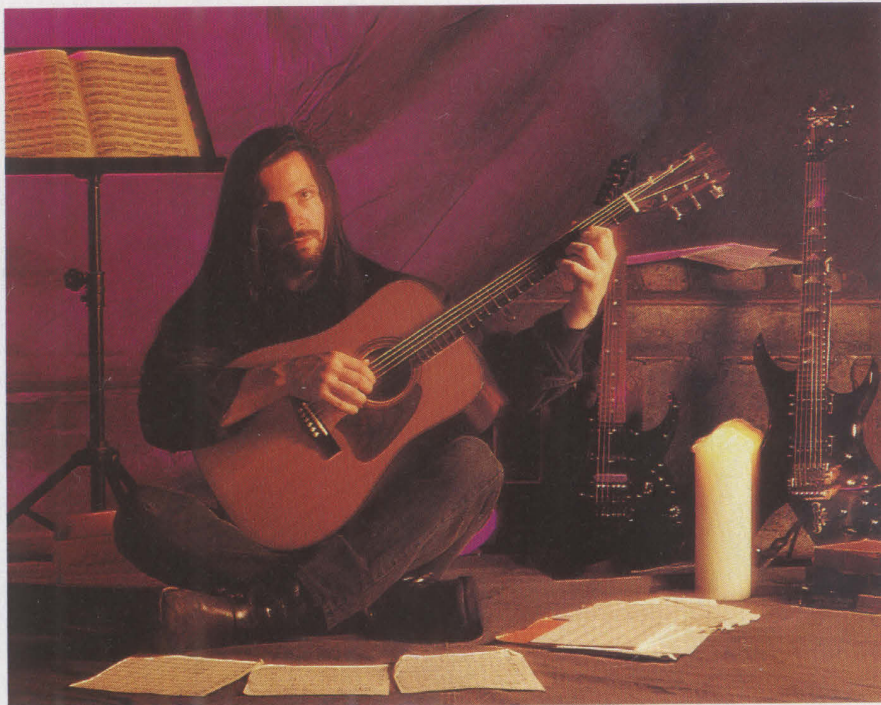
I arrive at the hotel before Glenn and Chuck. Go figure. At least there is a limo waiting.

1:30 p.m.

An hour and a half late after collecting Glenn and Chuck, we arrive at the first shoot for *Request* magazine. The poor photographer is forced to work at light speed. All in all, it went okay.

2:30 p.m.

The band piles back into the limo and cruises across town to a studio in Culver City. This is a rare double photo session: one is for the back cover of our forthcoming CD; the other is for the cover of *RIP* magazine. The CD cover shoot situation has the band lined up in coffins, with eyes closed and hands crossed on our chests. It's reminiscent of an old 19th Century still photograph of dead outlaws on display—but there is one distinct difference: In our shot, President Clinton is seen standing in the foreground shaking the hand of a policeman armed with a shotgun. In the background are a policewoman and two Secret Service men, played by American Recordings employees. In-between the two



sessions I manage to squeeze in a phone call to my dad to wish him a happy birthday. As if I hadn't had enough of photographers and pictures, I also call Marty and ask him to meet me in the valley later to approve some shots from our last session. I need some cool looks to send to Ibanez,

Terry Dennis at D'Aquisto strings and Spectraflex cables, and to various domestic and European publications.

9:30 p.m.

Back in the valley I meet with Marty and then do some last-minute shopping on my way over to my girlfriend's place. She helps me pack before heading off to the living room for our last few hours of quality couch potato time. Tomorrow at noon I leave for six weeks.

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**EPILOGUE**

Two days later in Holland, Murphy's Law struck a swift kick to the chest. The promoter failed to provide some vital equipment. He had the wrong drums, the wrong Marshall cabinets, and wireless units with no antennas! Ah, Europe.... To make things more interesting, my new and improved guitar rig wasn't operating properly. My tech, Crash, had not seen my gear since last summer. Imagine, if you will, the two of us on stage in front of 110,000 drunk, impatient fans, fiddling with wires and connections, hoping to get lucky. Such was not the case. We decided to go back to basics. We ran the guitar through an old distortion pedal and straight into the front of my VHT Pitbull head. The show was fine until the standby switch on the Pitbull vibrated to the "off" position during the solo in "Am I Demon." Other than a bit too much distortion in the quiet parts of two songs, things went surprisingly well. Mere words cannot describe the relief I felt when it was all over. There's nothing like the excitement of overcoming massive obstacles in front of the largest gathering of people you've ever seen! Such are the (mis)adventures of life out on the road!