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Power Pioneers

Former Misfit Glen Danzig Leads New Outfit Into Action.

Glen Danzig may be the best known unknown currently on the metal scene. He's never been involved with a platinum-selling LP and he's not exactly an MTV favorite. But it's safe to say that without his guiding light, much of the fame enjoyed today by the likes of Metallica and Megadeth would never have come about. You see, Danzig was formerly the leader of such seminal groups as the Misfits and Samhain — bands that linked the raw energy of punk with the heavy-handedness of metal. Although those bands achieved little more than cult status, Danzig is today at the helm of a new band, one that bears his last name. With the release of the group's self-titled debut LP, vocalist Danzig, drummer Chuck Biscuits, guitarist John Christ and bassist Eerie Von have set out to show a new generation of metal fans that hardcore punk and hard rock aren't as different as some may think. Recently we hooked up with Glen to discuss this very matter.

Power Metal: Do you think the world is finally ready for Danzig?

Glen Danzig: I hope so. It's still kind of hard to tell exactly what the reaction to the album has been. I mean, we're on a major label, so we should be selling records and people should be very aware of us, but I'm not sure that's happening yet. The people at the label have been real anxious to make sure something happens with this band, and they've given us the kind of support we need — though they don't really know that much about us. Hell, even the bio they did on us is full of misinformation. But I'm not complaining. I'm just happy that people care enough about us to even write a bio.

PM: Your earlier efforts with bands like the Misfits and Samhain have often been credited

by Rolf Huggott

with giving life to the current Power Metal scene. How do you feel about that?

GD: Well, I'm not so sure I want to take any credit for the kind of music I'm hearing out there. Most of it is really bad. There are some bands like Slayer and Metallica who are doing interesting things. But most of the other groups are just copying them. That's really sad. But what really bothers me is that the term "heavy metal" has grown to include stupid shit like Bon Jovi and Def Leppard. That's ridiculous. I still believe that speed metal is great, and I think there's plenty of room for bands to grow within the metal form. But I don't see it happening now.

PM: So what is your new band doing to bring

some life back into Power Metal?

GD: What we tried to do, with the help of our producer, Rick Rubin, was create an album that wasn't instantly disposable. We wanted to make a record that people would want to listen to 20 years from now. That's real ambitious, but I think we pulled it off. Too much of the music that's being made today is just garbage that should never be listened to, or should be instantly forgotten. It's time that bands start getting back to making music that's gonna stand the test of time.

PM: Metallica covered two old songs of yours, *Last Caress* and *Green Hell*, on their *Garage Days* package. What did you think of those?

GD: Not much. I'm not saying I didn't like 'em, but they just didn't have much of an effect on me. I kind of liked the way we did the songs



Frank White

Bassist Eerie Von: Adding the pounding bottom to the Danzig sound.

Guitarist John Christ: Fast, loud and furious.



Frank White

originally, so I wasn't sure if they needed new versions. I kind of like the guys in Metallica, because they always wore Samhain T-shirts and they really liked the Misfits. I wish them all the luck in the world. But I don't worry about how other people react to my music and I don't think about bands that cover my songs. If they like 'em, that's great. If they don't, I don't really care.

"Too much of the music that's being made today is just garbage."

PM: You made a video for the song *Mother* on your new LP. Did you enjoy doing that?

GD: Yeah, we enjoyed doing it because we did what we wanted to do. Everyone thought we'd have a lot of trouble with MTV's censors, but they were pretty cool about the whole thing. I mean, there's some pretty crazy stuff going on in the video. There's this chicken that I tear apart — though I don't *actually* do that. And the blood falls on this girl's stomach. Then I draw an upside-down cross with the blood on her belly. It's wild. We knew when we were making the video that if it got on the air, we'd be lucky. We weren't going after heavy rotation or anything like that. But MTV shows clips from *Nightmare On Elm Street 4*, where there's a lot more blood and weird shit going on in our video. So you never know what's going on in those corporate minds up there.

PM: How important is commercial success to you? After all, you've influenced some very successful bands although you've never tasted that kind of success yourself.

GD: I love selling records, I can't deny that. But I've never let my interest in doing that stand in my way of doing what I believe in. One of the benefits of being on a major label is that we know the records will at least be presented to all the big chains around the country. Whether we get on the shelves is another story, but there's really no reason we shouldn't. The record's really not that controversial and we don't curse on it, so it should sell some copies. But if people are looking for a target to pick on, I must admit that we're not hard to find.

PM: What are your tour plans for the next few months?

GD: There's been talk of playing some shows with Metallica, and that would be great. I think their audience would really appreciate us. That's a big benefit of a band like Metallica being fans of ours — they'll give us a break on tour. Then we might go out and play some dates on our own. We'll play Misfits and Samhain tunes, as well as songs from the new album when we headline in clubs. But the goal for us is to stay in the arenas. You know, you've got to move that product! □