

# REQUEST

Modern Rock Metal Rap Country Jazz World Music Blues R+B

## DANZIG & WRITER TABITHA KING ON SEX, VIOLENCE & SERIAL KILLERS

**AMERICAN MUSICIANS CASH IN ABROAD**

**THE PRIVATE LIVES &  
PROFESSIONAL FRUSTRATIONS  
OF MATTHEW SWEET & FREEDY JOHNSTON**

**DINOSAUR JR., LUSCIOUS JACKSON  
& THE ROLLING STONES**



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# SEPT.

## THE BEAUTY OF THE BEAST

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## LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PUSUIT OF THE PERFECT COUPLET

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Male of the specious: Glenn Danzig's muscle-bound worldview may not square with your own, but that's just fine with him (see page 28).  
Photograph by Greg Allen.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH FOR REQUEST BY GREG ALLEN.

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### DETOUR

**P.78** Legendary **Velvet Underground** drummer **Moe Tucker** on improvisational drumming, small towns, and solitude. *by Cathy Camper*



**GLENN DANZIG DOESN'T LIKE MOST PEOPLE.** He informs me of this almost as soon as we meet.

Still, the 10-foot-high fence of iron spikes surrounding his house comes as a mild shock. It's a small house on a small lot in an unremarkable Los Angeles neighborhood. The height of the fence and its uncompromising spikes might as easily be keeping something in as something out. For me, though, part of the shock is recognition. Make no mistake, the fence around Glenn Danzig's house is forbidding.

The porch was shaken loose in January's earthquake and is partially dismantled, and the stained-glass windows have been removed from their frames and are packed up in the living room, waiting to be repaired. Danzig is sanguine about the damage; he plans to sell the house and move out of Los Angeles. "Tahoe," he says, then shrugs and adds he'll probably settle for someplace closer to L.A.

The interior of the house is dark—oh hell, gloomy. Dungeon stonework walls the living room. There are several lighted candles, although it is midday. On one side of a fireplace, a kid-sized figure of Marvin the Martian, the cartoon character, is a splotch of kelly green, Popsicle red and grape, and crayon yellow in the chiaroscuro. Taz, the Tasmanian devil, is on the other side. They are tribute, paid for Danzig's signing a contract with Warner Bros. Keeping them company is a stuffed gray wolf.

When the wolf first arrived, Danzig explains, the cats (he has two, an inside one and an outside one) beshat themselves in consternation. Now they regard the nameless beast as a kitty playground. The cat—the inside cat—twitching around the room is the same sleek steel gray as the wolf. The cat stalks the microphone of my tape recorder and pounces upon it.

Danzig produces a head of the monster Flagg from the television miniseries of *The Stand*. It matches the one in my own house, which was presented to my husband, Stephen, and me by Steve Johnson, who designed the head. Danzig acquired his through Norman Cabrera, who worked with Johnson on the project. Cabrera also designed a video costume for Danzig based on science-fiction fantasy artist H.R. Giger's "Meister und Margeritha" cover of *How the Gods Kill*, Danzig's 1992 album. The Flagg has some of the same snaky monstrosity that characterizes Giger's gothic-machine vision of the body.

Danzig enthuses about his own comic-book imprint, Verotik. He's planning to publish the master heroic fantasist Frank Frazetta and wants to publish Tim Vigil, best known for the violent and erotic Faust series. He confesses to writing short stories in an erotic-horror vein that he would like to publish in comic-book form.

And casually he says, "I've been offered the part of Wolverine. I'll take it if I see a good script."

In the commercially released video *Danzig*, he identifies Wolverine as his favorite comic-book hero. From his powerful torso and arms to the way he wears his hair, Danzig strikingly resembles Wolverine as portrayed in the *X-Men* comic series.

Does the music do it for him anymore, the way it seems his interest in comic books does? He doesn't hesitate with a blunt negative.

Which doesn't mean he expresses any interest in embarking on a minor-league baseball career. So far, the mingling of comic books and metal is working just fine. He was in the studio the previous night mixing his new album, *Danzig 4p*, and is on tour with his band this summer, filling the middle slot of a triple bill between Suicidal Tendencies and Metallica. Of Metallica, he says with a flicker of a smile, "They're not afraid of us anymore."

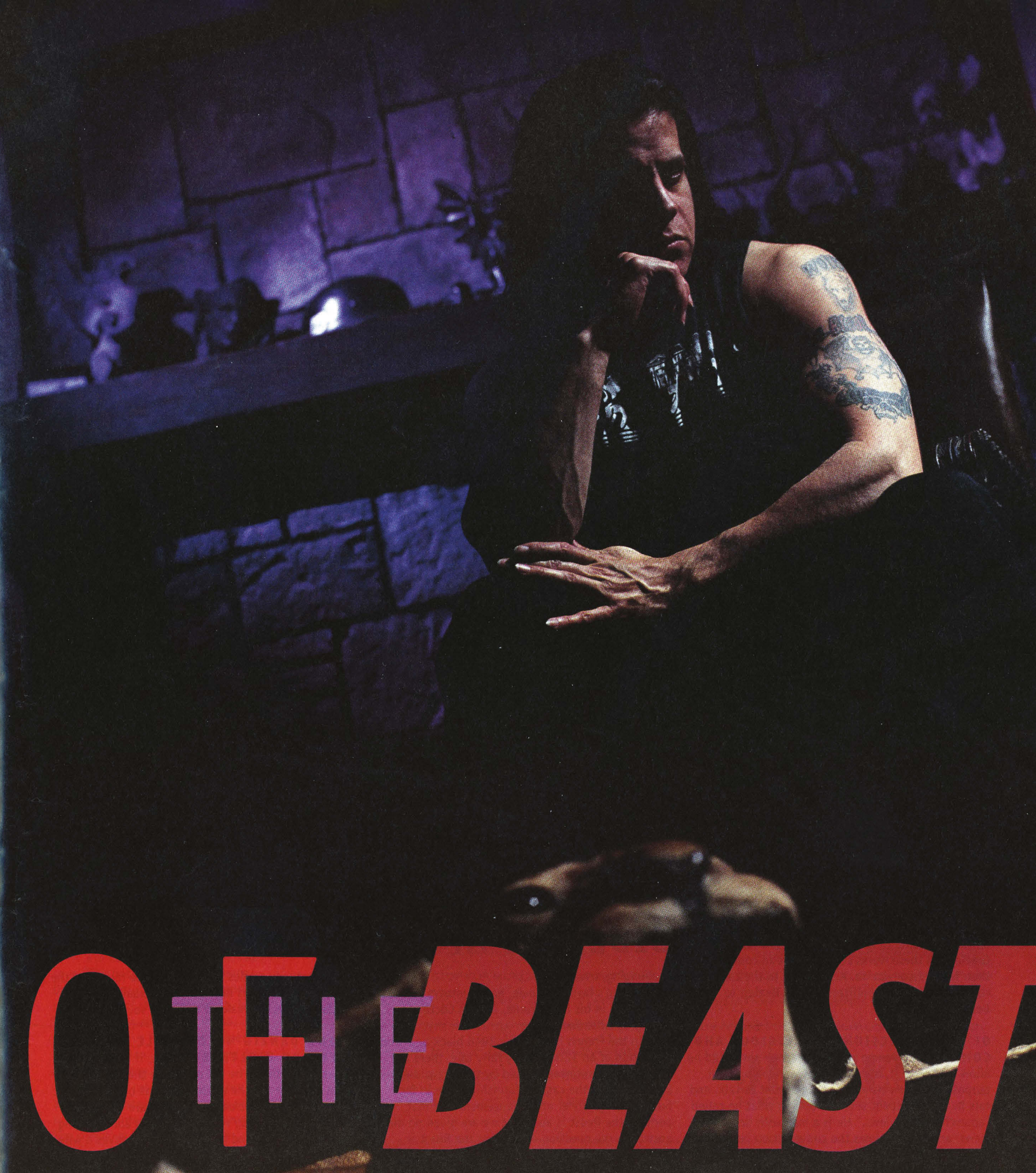
***If a contemporary Dr. Frankenstein set out to build himself a heavy-metal rocker, the result would be the muscled and tattooed Glenn Danzig.***

# THE Beauty

BY TABITHA KING

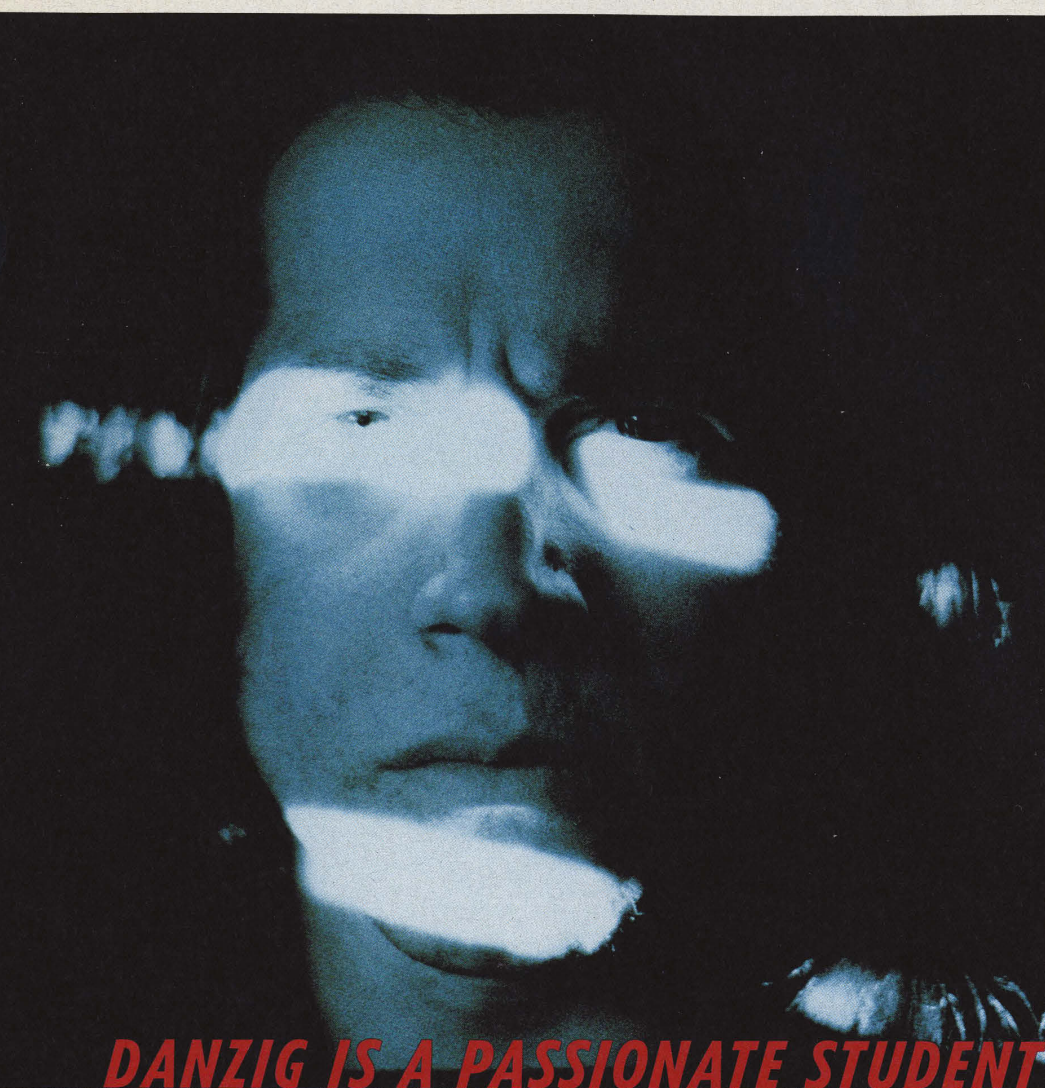
PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG ALLEN





# OF THE BEAST





## DANZIG IS A PASSIONATE STUDENT

Throughout his career—with the bands Misfits, Samhain, and Danzig—Glenn Danzig's themes and obsessions have never varied, whatever the beat. Though he once studied photography, he has become a passionate student of subjects that make most people uneasy: demonology, serial killers, the occult, lycanthropy, biblical apocrypha. He has a favorite source of arcana in *The Magickal Child*, a New York occult toschke shop. It smells of incense and herbs and mildewed books, and purveys a range of items from new-age crystals to black wax *Hands of Glory*. The book selection offers a dizzying assortment from Shirley MacLaine to Aleister Crowley to Andrew Greeley. All these works seem to have in common is their fevered conviction. A sign next to the cash register advises, "Shoplifters Will Be Beaten to Death."

**OF HIS COLLECTION OF RELIGIOUS AND COMIC ART**, Danzig would not speak nor would he allow me to see it, although that was the original purpose of our meeting. But he did want to talk, and talk he did. We spent several hours in what he called "an exchange of views." He is a man with decided views, and several times the conversation became

*of subjects that make most people uneasy:*

**DEMONOLOGY, SERIAL KILLERS, THE OCCULT, LYCANTHROPY, BIBLICAL APOCRYPHA.**

challenging, even angry.

Danzig's favorite movie, he volunteers as we take chairs in his living room, is Jean Cocteau's *Beauty and the Beast*.

In the French filmmaker's 1946 black-and-white recreation of an 18th century fairy tale, there is a sense of enchantment created by the unavoidable suspicion that the castle's furnishings are in fact human beings under an entrancement and that perhaps the Beast is also. But we are given no direct answer to the question of whether the Beast is

indeed a beast or a beast with a man's heart and soul. After nearly 50 years, Cocteau's film retains its disturbing magic.

The beast with a man's heart and soul, or the man with the beast's face, surfaces continually in the stories we tell each other. The Werewolf, of course. The Vampire. Frankenstein's Monster. The Zombie. The Mummy. The Alien. And the all-time ever-popular beast, the Prince of Darkness himself. All the monsters and all the undead. And the superheroes, the other aspect of the nonhuman, often take the attributes of beasts in order to battle evil.

Wolverine, for instance, bears more than a passing resemblance to Cocteau's Beast. Though Wolverine uses his beastly instincts and strength for good, he admits he likes to kill, a confession the Beast in the Cocteau film also makes. But the Beast, like all the beasts, clearly expresses being out of control and is frantic to reassert it, some kind of control, over anything or anybody handy.

According to Dartmouth assistant professor Robert Walser in his 1993 study of heavy metal, *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*, "...heavy metal often stages fantasies of masculine virtuosity and control. Musically, heavy metal articulates a dialectic of controlling power and transcendent freedom.... Like opera, heavy metal draws upon many sources of power: mythology, violence, madness, the iconography of horror. But none surpasses gender in its potential to inspire anxiety and to ameliorate it.... Heavy metal is...an arena of gender, where spectacular gladiators compete to register and affect ideas of masculinity, sexuality and gender relations."

Walser's descriptions of the sources of heavy metal easily could serve to catalog Danzig's bookshelves. In fact, if a contemporary Dr. Frankenstein set out to build himself a heavy-metal rocker, the end result would be Glenn Danzig. On stage, shirtless, gauntleted, the muscled and tattooed Danzig is a gladiator enacting a spectacle, a fantasy of unconstrainable masculine power. As punk once offered a forum for his rebellion, heavy metal is a natural progression for the operatic Sturm und Drang that he finds most satisfying. Heavy metal is the natural score to a comic-book reality: a dangerous world in which villains conspire, oppress, and prey; heroes struggle with the corrupting tendencies of their own power; titanic battle

authoritatively settles conflict; and the female of the species is at least as deadly—and sexually predatory—as the male, if not more so.

**GLENN DANZIG HOLDS, WELL, VIOLENT VIEWS ON VIOLENCE.** In fact, if he has mild views on anything, he did not share them with me. Even when he says he doesn't care, as on the subject of Kurt Cobain's suicide, he doesn't care violently. ("Ultimately, the guy's a moron, worth about f—ing \$15, \$20 million, and he kills himself. Leaves a wife



and kid. He has a lot of money, he could have changed things....")

"I've been involved in violence," Danzig says. "I've seen it happen. I've had to break women up from killing each other. I've had to break women up from hurting guys. I've had to break guys up from hurting women. I've had to break guys up from hurting each other. I've been shot at, stabbed, you name it. Don't tell me about violence. I don't need someone who sits back and writes books and watches TV to tell me about violence. I know the history of violence. I read history books, and I know the history of violence, and it's not just men."

He is insistent that the government deliberately suppresses the evidence of female violence in order to perpetrate the myth of female nonviolence and to prevent women from realizing other women may be violent too.

"No one wants to think of a woman as ruthless, as predatory," he says. "The lion sees the weaker buffalo that it's going to take down and knows that that's an easy target. OK, it's the same. A woman sees a strong male and a weaker male; which does she know she can take down quicker? The weaker. It's the same thing with a male too. Who does the guy want at home? To be his wife and mother? The docile female. Who does he want to have as his mistress? The independent, predatory female. But he doesn't necessarily want to have her as his wife. It's the same thing with a woman. She wants the guy she can control at home, with the money, and she wants the fiery lover later on."

The generalization is broad, he admits.

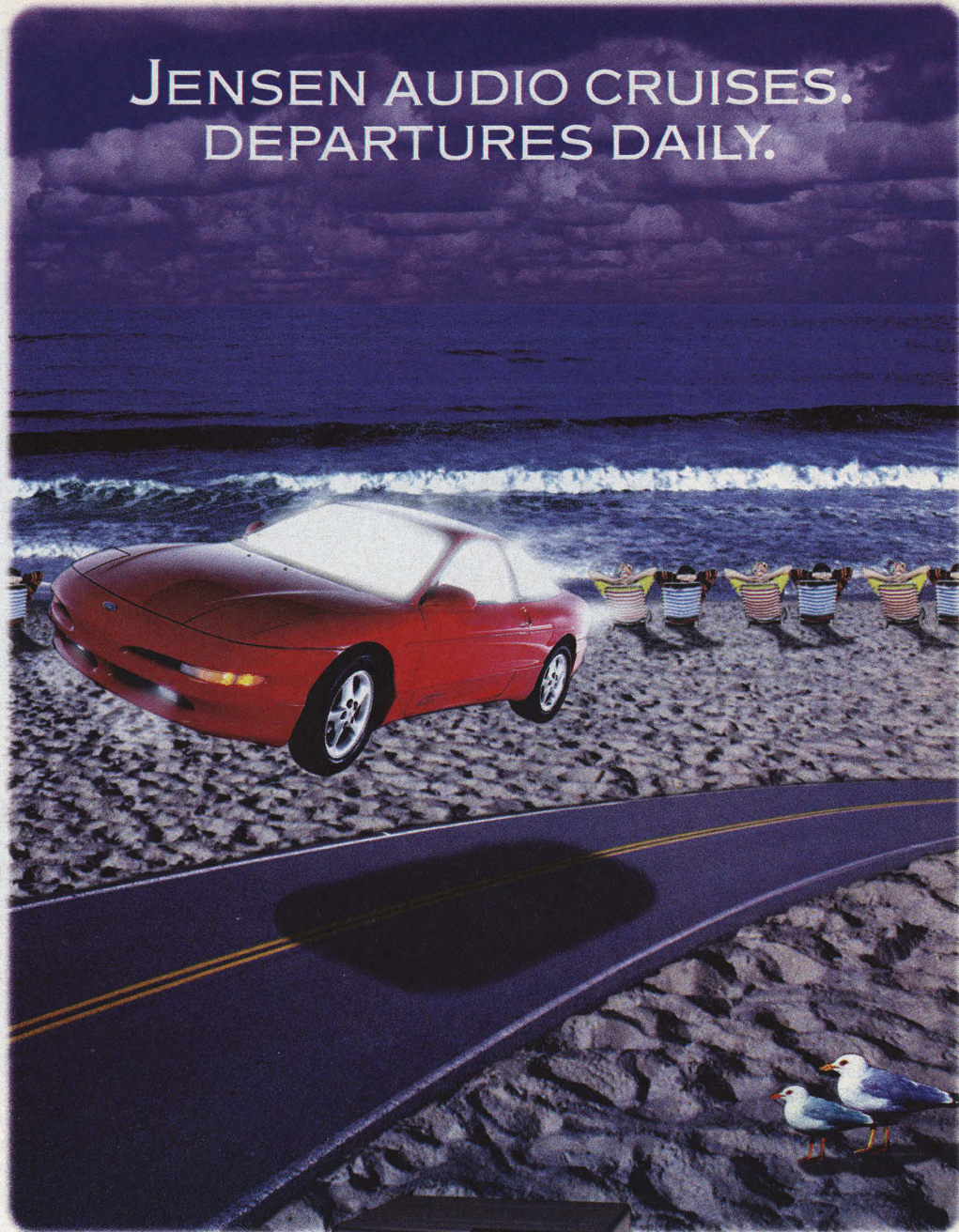
Given Danzig's distrust of the government, it would probably be a waste of time to cite the FBI statistics that indicate males commit about 90 percent of all reported homicides.

Danzig may intercede in violence between people he knows, but as regards the world at large, he declares himself indifferent to its spasms of violence. One genocide is the same as another.

"I'm not opposed to death," he says. "I'm not opposed to violence. Death is a natural part of the world, a natural part of this whole cycle. If you know anything about this world, nothing can live forever. If it does, it upsets the balance of everything dying and replenishing."

The gray cat bounds into his lap, and he addresses it attentively, petting it with the intensity a cat demands. The sensuous luxuriating of the cat

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reminds me of a Danzig video, a pole dancer writhing at the feet of a crucified horned god; blood spattered on a trussed woman's navel. Yet he denies stereotyping women in his videos.

**Tabitha King:** *Is sexuality evil?*

**Glenn Danzig:** "Until the Christians got into power, sex was just sex, and it had lots of different uses, incorporating it into either magic or some kind of ritualistic practices."

**TK:** *There is a theory that the practice of showing heavy-metal concert crowds giant-screen TV images of female fans baring their breasts actually soothes the mob. And certainly the influence of Freud and advertising has most of us convinced that sex is almost never just sex. For capitalism, sex is a selling tool. That's bottom-line capitalism: Everything's for sale, including your ass.*

**GD:** "Some people are pushed into prostitution for the money, but they do have an option of working at a record store or whatever. They want that fast, quick money. They're not stupid about it. I hate the fact that people will say, oh well, they had to become prostitutes. They didn't have to become prostitutes. They could have taken another job making less money. They didn't want to do that. And it is their decision what to do with their life."

**TK:** *What's your personal philosophy?*

**GD:** "I don't screw with anybody. If they screw with me, I will decimate them, if I have to. Or I'll walk away from it. However I want to defuse the situation. If that means annihilating them, that's what I will do. If that is my only choice, I will do it in a second. If I do have a choice to walk away, to defuse the situation, I will do that. If that works, great, and if it doesn't, then that's the end."

"First you have to deal with yourself and your own problems, then you can deal with other people. Unless you clean house in your own body and get yourself straight and centered, you cannot deal with the world. [Danzig centers himself through *jeet kwan do.*] That's the main issue. Whatever the world has to offer—the problems, the pleasures, everything—you have to be centered enough to deal with; if you're confused, you will not make a rational decision."

**TK:** *What would you change?*

**GD:** "The government basically does what they want to do, and they have their own agenda. The basic premises of America are real great. I'm in favor of so much less government. Right now we have too



**'UNLESS YOU CLEAN HOUSE  
IN YOUR OWN BODY**

*and get yourself  
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much government. I don't see much difference between the Democrats or the Republicans. I thought I'd never see a more corrupt government than Nixon; couldn't get worse than Carter, got Reagan; couldn't get worse than Bush, got Clinton. Clinton has destroyed this country. He's a liar."

**TK:** *Do you vote?*

**GD:** "No, I don't vote. Should I? I was gonna vote for Perot."

**TK:** *I've read you have an interest in serial killers.*

**GD:** "I'd love to see somebody do a book on serial killing because not one of them's the same and they're all the same. A book done in a documentary style, interviews with the person. No guy saying, 'And he clearly meant....' The Jeffrey Dahmer book, there's just so much supposition. As far as the

cannibalism thing, I don't find that terribly crazy."

**TK:** *It's a big taboo.*

**GD:** "Tell it to someone who's been eating, you know, human meat all their life."

**TK:** *Cannibalism isn't unusual in serial killing, is it?*

**GD:** "We're not actually looking at serial killing, we're looking at cannibalism. I'm not saying Jeffrey Dahmer was a serial killer. He was eating the people. He wasn't dumping them on the side of the road. A serial killer is by definition a person who, with no rhyme or reason, kills a person and just dumps 'em and goes on and on. Senseless."

**TK:** *They always have a rhyme and reason, and it's always sex.*

**GD:** "You gotta read a lot more. There are a lot of serial killers that just kill people for the kick of it: They kill 'em, there's no sex involved whatsoever, they kill 'em. Sometimes they psychologically or physically torture them, but it's just on the road to killing this person. There's no sexual gratification whatsoever. It's a kick; it's a thrill. The real definition of a serial killer is no motive, no *modus operandi*, just random killing."

**TK:** *Seeking a thrill or a kick, is that not a motivation?*

**GD:** "Sometimes. OK, Green River's never been caught; Zodiac's never been caught. It just goes to show how much, if you set yourself up to be prey in this country, you will be prey."

**DANZIG** brings up the subject of Louis Farrakhan.

**GD:** "It's important people hear what Reverend Farrakhan has to say. He does make a lot of important points. He's very intelligent. He has an agenda and whatever he needs to further that agenda, he will do or say. His whole revisionist history—there are a lot of holes in it. I do like the thing he says to black people and to all people: Stop blaming everybody for your problems. You wanna change your life, get up and do it. Don't expect the white man or any man to do it. That's basically a law for everybody. It can't be disputed."

"A song on the new record, it's called 'White Devil Rise.' I don't mind him calling me a white devil. That's fine with me, and I'm actually very comfortable with that. As far as blaming me for all the ills and this and that, take a hike. The slavery thing, people blow it up too much. We were all slaves. Everybody seems to forget everybody was slaves. That is the world, and it's never gonna change either. To say that black people are unique in that they were slaves is bullshit. In feudal England, you were sold with your (continued on page 70)



# Danzig

(continued from page 32) land. It kills me when someone says, 'We want restitution.' Who do I go to get restitution? The Romans fed so many Christians to the lions. I want restitution.

"Everyone needs to blame someone for their problems. People who don't really think a lot anyway, who are looking for somebody and can only—I hate to call them nine-to-five mutants, but that's what they are anyway—they come home, they watch TV, they go to bed. All they know of the world is what they see on TV and what goes down at work and what they read in the newspaper.

There's no outside source of information to show there's a bigger world out there, and that is their world out there. And these guys and women buy into this. They bought into Hitler; they buy into Clinton. White people are tired of being blamed for all this and that, and going down the street and seeing crime.

"Whether anyone wants to admit it or not, there is a bigger crime rate among black people than white. But you see weirder crimes committed by white people. White people experience an oppression that no one talks about and that is surfacing in very distinct ways. Unless it's dealt with, the powder keg blows. You'll be seeing some heavy-duty stuff. I've been saying it for a while. It's starting to happen.



**THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER— with the Misfits, Samhain, and Danzig (pictured here)—**

**GLENN DANZIG'S THEMES AND OBSESSIONS HAVE NEVER VARIED.**

Everyone's concerned with the black plight or the Mexican plight, while the white people are just as poor and have just as many problems."

**TK:** *The Aryan Brotherhood, the Klan?*

**GD:** "I don't think the Klan is anything, is a force to be reckoned with. Dumb and stupid."

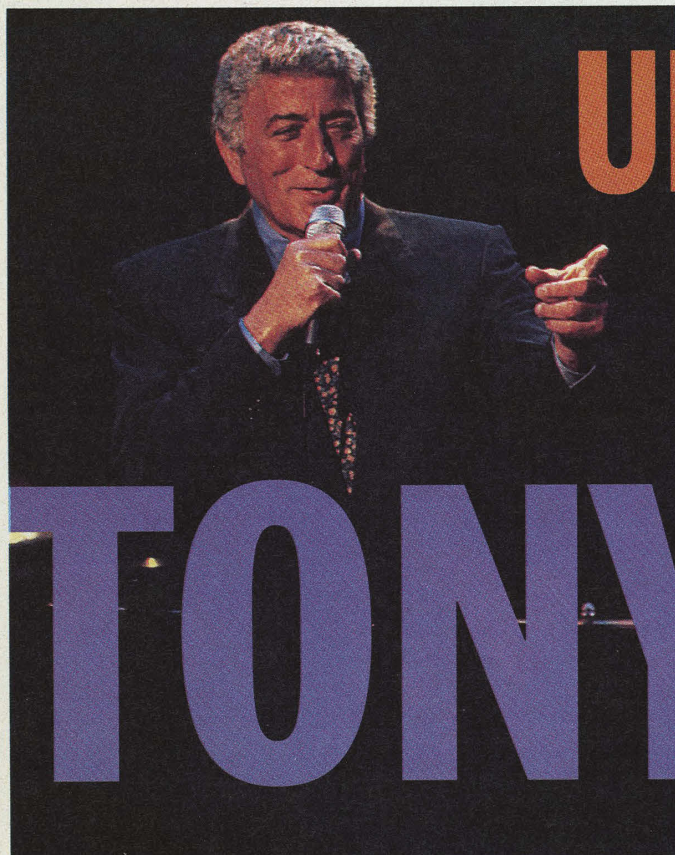
**TK:** *Ethnic ravidity is killing by the tens of thousands in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina.*

**GD:** "I'm not going to feel sorry for any of them. It's their own bed. Everyone's saying America should be there. America has homeless people here and a potential race war brewing. We better deal with our own problems and stop sending money over there."

**TK:** *This is inconsistent with your ideas that people are ultimately responsible for their own lives. Aren't people homeless in part because of their own choices?*

**GD:** "Yes, but what I'm saying is rather than seeing it pissed away in some foreign country, I'd rather see the money spent here on people in this country. I don't care. That's what I see. If I have a choice and I guess as an American citizen, I don't have a choice...[laughs]. Regardless of how I feel about these people, I'd rather see it here. Because, ultimately, these people, their outcomes, affect my country more than this other place. I have to live here, and I don't have to live there."

**THE CONTRADICTION OF NOT CARING,** violently, comes full circle, turning like a spindle on a single point: We all have to live here. Subject for future consideration: What do you do if you have to live there? ●



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