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DEADLY
KISS**

**DUFF
MCKAGAN
GUN
SOLO**



**DANZIG
KREATOR
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W.A.S.P.
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MINDFUNK
BLIND MELON**

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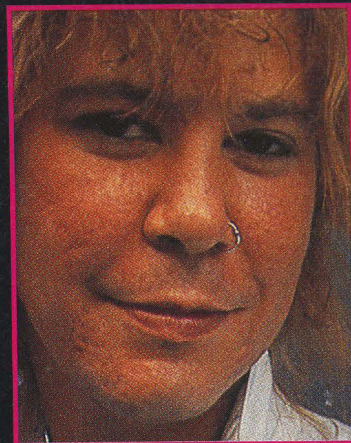
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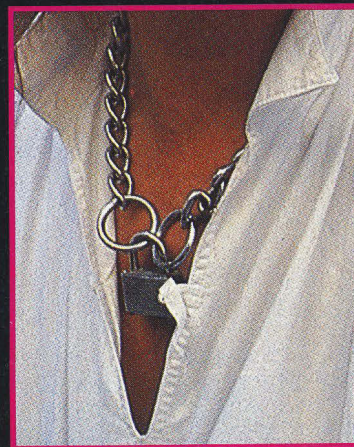
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DUFF McKAGAN
by Robert John

WHITE ZOMBIE
by Lisa Johnson

"Uh, those are Eerie's." A grinning Glenn Danzig's referring to the cheap tapestries tacked up on the walls of his dressing room at New York's Ritz, the ones depicting the American rock hero to whom all others must bow, Elvis Presley—movie star Elvis and Vegas '72 Elvis. Between them hangs another \$14 tapestry from the bassist's collection, this one of Jesus Christ. Someone's Magic Marker-ed a skull over his features. How the gods kill, indeed—and they say these people have no sense of humor!

"Actually, the Jesus one used to say 'Chris Cornell' at the top," Glenn smirks.

Danzig puts you at ease in a way you'd never expect from someone with his Frank-Frazetta-painting-come-to-life image. He's a lot smaller in person than he looks onstage, and also quite charming, gobbling down candy and extolling the virtues of martial arts, his favorite comic-book artists and Def American head honcho Rick Rubin's latest acquisition, The Smoky Mountain Wrestling League ("It's what wrestling used to be: bloody, silly, hilarious, outrageous, violent"). He speaks with a New Jersey-bred Italian bravura that goes hand-in-hand with his "don't give a f!k" ethos, the one that's made him a rock legend in his own time.

"Basically, we do whatever we want now," he declares bluntly. "No one f!ks with us, and if they try to, we don't let them."

It's been an uphill struggle for Glenn since he began his career fronting the legendary Misfits. He's always been determined to have things his way, rather than settle for "the way it is." Danzig's latest seven-track slab, *Thrall-Demonsweatlive*, is no exception. It's a smattering of new material combined with live tracks recorded at a sold-out assault on California's Irvine Meadows Amphitheater last Halloween. The live stuff is presented straight up, no overdubs, growls, warts 'n' all. Even after being right so many times before, though, Glenn had to fight to get the folks at Def American and their parent company, Warner Brothers, to release the thing the way he wanted it released.

"It was just something we wanted to do," he says matter-of-factly. "We weren't ready to do an album yet. We were going to Europe, and we wanted to do an EP of live stuff 'cause we're getting bootlegged like crazy. We just decided to give the fans more for their money. Let's face it: Record companies don't even care about the kids; they don't care at all. We did a lot of wrangling with our record company before *How the Gods Kill* came out, and Rick [Rubin] and I got to talk about a lot of stuff that's important—retaining creative control, getting through all the red tape. To be honest, an EP like this confounds record companies in America. I remember when Metallica was doing *Garage Days*, which was their first gold record! Initially the people at the record company were like, 'A seven-song EP? Let's just put it out in Europe.' I was like, 'You're crazy! We have all these fans here in America. What are you gonna do, make them buy it for five times more as an import?' That's the kind of thing that makes me bang my head against the wall!"

Glenn unfolds the EP's cover, chuckling to himself as he glances at Mark Leialoha's shots of the concert. "It was the first time the barricades ever got broken at Irvine," he says proudly. "They've had everything there—Clash Of The Titans, Bon Jovi, you name it. It was insane. I looked out towards the end of the set, and up on the lawn there were two bonfires with kids slamming around them. It looked like a pagan ritual, something out of Tarzan!"

Danzig full throttle is the sort of band that burrows under the skin with razor-sharp talons and an iron grip. Blame it on Glenn's meaty roar, John Christ's lush, bloody guitars, and bassist Eerie Von coupled to Chuck Biscuits' ten-ton thump. It's a *danse macabre* for the senses, power-lust unshackled. Forget any notions of hip, trendy or MTV's "music revolution"—Danzig and Co. ain't buyin'.

Tony Wooliscroft/Angles



"MTV won't play any of our videos—so what?" Glenn sneers. "On Video Jukebox I guess we were the most-requested metal band. That's not bad. A lot of things are changing in this stupid thing called the record industry. As far as I'm concerned, Rick Rubin shook this industry up years ago. Who would have ever thought a band like Sonic Youth would be on Geffen? Hell, now we've got Video Jukebox playing all the metal and gangster rap that MTV won't play, and kids are calling up in droves and probably recording their favorite bands relatively uncensored. Believe me, what the kids want is what MTV *isn't* giving them. All those bands like Bon Jovi, Poison and Warrant, who stop selling records the minute MTV stops playing them—we're not part of that and never have been."

He pulls a wicked grin. "I heard Bon Jovi came out the other night at his L.A. concert. It was a half-filled house, and he told the crowd, 'I want all those Seattle bands to know that I can still rock!' Who cares? I don't think they

give two shits about Bon Jovi. Who cares? Just do it. If you have to play in a f!kin' club, play in a f!kin' club. We've gone to every size venue in the world. Tonight we're at the Ritz; tomorrow we'll be at a shithole in Tennessee somewhere. All that matters is getting up and sending out an emotion to people."

Glenn harbors no illusions of mass acceptance for Danzig's latest video, for the song "It's Coming Down." The clip is as outrageous and over-the-top as anything he's ever done before, a hard-core S&M trip portraying the band sweating it out in a tableau replete with pierced penises, bondage and masturbation. In a particularly Spinal Tap-ish moment (with no hint of irony, natch), Glenn and a dominatrix walk two leather-togged amputees on leashes! Real family fare, there.

"Originally that was supposed to be my 'Helter Skelter' song, but eventually it became this anthem to a socio-sexual revolution," Glenn reveals. "It became apparent when I added the sexual element to it that it's not a mu-

DANZIG

D e m o n S e e d

sic revolution we're talking about, it's a whole social revolution. No one wants it to happen, but it's happening! That's one reason we're taking [Florida bondage bashers] the Genitorturers on tour with us."

From David Koresh and the armageddon at Waco to the bombing of the World Trade Center, it's a fact: The '90s is an extreme decade. I wonder if Glenn has an explanation for why a new age of brutality seems to be coming down.

"People are more frustrated now," he sighs. "People are getting dumber, saying to themselves, 'Who cares anymore?' Look at the L.A. riots, violence on the streets. People have quicker tempers. They're looking for a new high, whether it's drugs or sex or whatever. Everything's played out. People are looking for an experience, something that isn't so commonplace. That's what we try to give them.

"I've never come out, really, on politics and social issues, but y'know what's made me even more angry and more violent?" he asks. "The way everybody got behind Bill Clinton. Did everybody forget that his running mate was Al Gore, whose wife is Tipper Gore, who still runs the PMRC? No one said a goddamned thing about it! This really pissed me off like you'd never believe. I thought Perot would've been the best bet. He probably would've been killed by the time he got into office though. That's what happens when you put someone rich in office who can't be bought. Look at the Kennedys. They couldn't control them, so they killed them.

"As far as what happened in Waco, I think the government offed the guy," Danzig declares. "Whether or not this guy was a maniac remains to be seen. I'm not so sure. I think the federal agents went in there on a crash-and-burn mission. The standoff was an embarrassment that was costing them millions a day. They torched that place. They say David Koresh torched it, but I'm not so sure. Government will always be govern-

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Peter Cronin/Photofeatures

ment. It's no wonder we're seeing some of the things we are these days."

Thrall's cover of Elvis Presley's "Trouble" brings up the longstanding comparison between Glenn's breathy baritone and the croon of the original King of Rock 'n' Roll. Indeed, Glenn has been pegged with the nickname "The Evil Elvis" for years now. Mention Presley, and he's quick to give a blow-by-blow of the man's career.

"Of course the movie albums really suck," he says. "There's just three or four songs out of maybe ten albums that are any good. Some of the '56 stuff is really good and, of course, one of my favorite Elvis albums is the Memphis one, where he had to prove that he wasn't just some movie star, and that he could really sing. There are some totally inspiring vocal performances on that album."

Glenn rattles off a list of his influences and heroes, and it's not surprising to hear names like Presley, Jim Morrison and Bill Medley come up. He sounds uncharacteristically awestruck, though, when talking about the late Roy Orbison, who he once collaborated with on a song, "Life Fades Away," for the *Less Than Zero* soundtrack. Glenn still remembers it as the musical experience of a lifetime.

"When I taught him that song, and he started singing it, his voice was so full—even when he was hitting the high notes—it was awe inspiring," he marvels. "The guy had been doing it for years, and there he was, singing my song!"

Danzig smiles even more broadly when mention is made of an upcoming collaboration with another living legend and recent Def American signee, Johnny Cash.

"The original man in black!" he says, barely hiding his excitement. "Rick Rubin asked me to write a song for him. I guess he told him I'd written a song for Roy, and Cash said, 'Okay, cool, let's get this guy to write me a song.' It's gonna be a badass folk-blues song called

Tony Wooliscroft/Angles



'Thirteen.' The guy really is the original badass. He was in and out of prison. He's still got a knife scar on his chin. When I was approached to write the song, I said yes immediately."

Glenn's talent as a singer-songwriter has often been obscured by the giant cow skulls and his occasional forays into satanic silliness. Does the author of such poignant tunes as the quietly pulsing "Sistinas" want to be taken more seriously now? It's not a real stretch to imagine him growing into a Chris Isaak-like figure, singing dark, stirring ballads.

"Y'know, I don't care anymore," he shrugs. "We do

what we do. 'Sistinas' or a song like 'Blood and Tears' on *Lucifuge* would diminish the band. We want to remain Danzig."

Okay, but what about going onstage with a 12-foot, light-up skull straight out of *Spinal Tap*? The muscle-bound man in black remains cool.

"Actually, we retired that," he smiles. "We'd had it for three or four years. It was time. Plus Chuck didn't want to play on a six-foot riser anymore! It was great. We used to turn the eyes on right before we'd go out, and everybody went nuts. We've been getting shit for it for years, but the fans love it."

He laughs also about a recent barb in *Spin* magazine that wrote him off as a "comic-collecting nerd" and launches into a defense of some of his favorite comics.

"Okay, fine," he snarls dauntingly. "If those people ever read *Black Kiss* by Howard Chaykin, they wouldn't be saying that. Or *Hard Boiled* by Frank Miller, or *Faust*. It's down to people's perceptions, and how closely they want to look at something."

On the road for a few more weeks, Glenn's itching to get home to Los Angeles to work on some of the other projects he's had on the back burner for far too long: a Danzig comic, a Danzig documentary film, and his own book company, tentatively called Tentacle, which will produce comic-art books featuring the work of greats like Frank Frazetta, Jack Kirby and Britain's Simon Bisley, whose lush paintings adorn the cover of *Thrall*. He's also interested in signing bands to his longstanding Plan 9 label, which originally released his classic work with the Misfits and Samhain.

Then there's his training in the martial arts. "I think it's helped me come to terms with life a lot more," Glenn claims. "I started training with a guy named Jerry Po-teet, who was one of the five Chinatown students Bruce Lee taught. He choreographed a lot of the fight sequences in the Bruce Lee movie, *Dragon*. I've always had a lot of similar philosophies, but my anger kept getting in the way of a lot of stuff. Working with Jerry has been really helpful. I'm real relaxed."

Of course there's a *Danzig 4* welling up inside him now, and it promises to be all power, all fury, all sweat, all guts.

"It's gonna be heavy," Glenn assures. "Musically and lyrically it'll be heavier and more aggressive than anything we've ever done before. It's gonna be a f!k you to everybody. So, everybody's playing the record company game? Well, here's a band that's not."

Coming from Glenn Danzig, that sounds like a promise. Next stop: Danzig unbound! •

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