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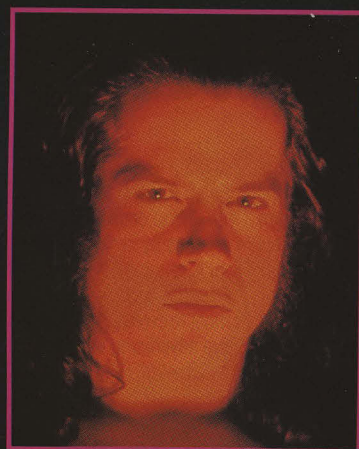
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DANZIG



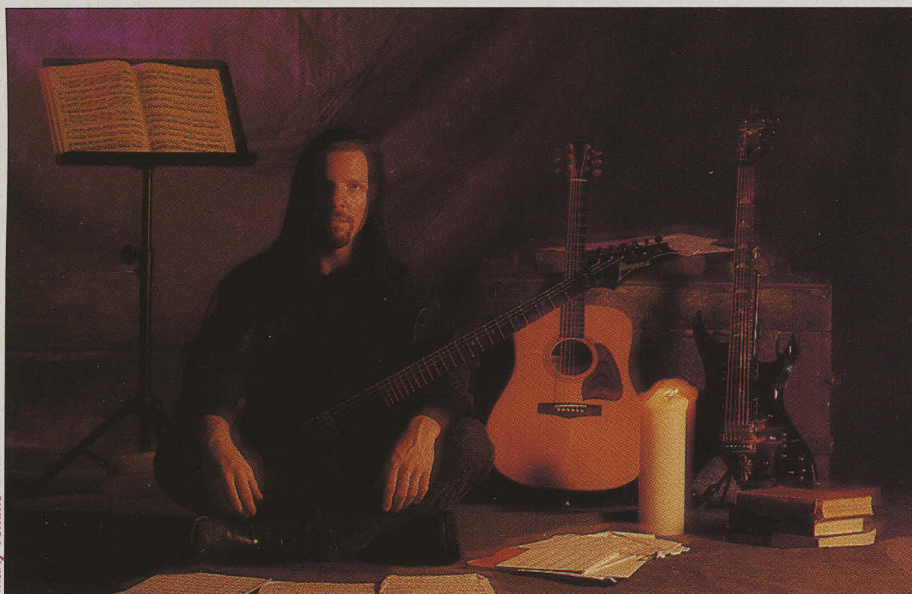
“There are a lot of people, that when a band gets popular, it’s not *their* band anymore all of a sudden. It’s a very childish, infantile attitude. Whereas if you really like the band it doesn’t matter whether they’re being played or not.” —Glenn Danzig

by Katherine Turman

MOTHER'S FINEST



It was a dark and stormy night...really, it was. And in the dicey industrial Hollyweird neighborhood that houses the Record Plant studios, Glenn Danzig, the reigning prince of rock darkness, is laughing. And playing pinball. And generally having a good ole time mixing the fourth Danzig album, appropriately titled *Danzig 4p* ("What should I call it, *Cherry Pie?*" he quips.) Turned out in his requisite black jeans and t-shirt, the singer/songwriter/entrepreneur [minus handmates John Christ, Eerie Von and Chuck Biscuits] chats with co-producer/label head Rick Rubin, takes a few phone calls and devotes nearly two hours to having his brain picked. It's past the witching hour when I take my leave, laden with a new appreciation for the music, humor, wide-ranging intelligence, strong personal convictions and quick wit of Mr. Glenn Danzig.



RIP: You seem very excited about your new comic book company...

GLENN DANZIG: It's called *Erotic*, and one of the characters is Satanica.

RIP: She's a character of your own creation?

GD: Yes. I draw up a thing and I send it to the artists, and the guys do the arts and stories. There's Simon Bisley, the guy that did the cover of the *Thrall* record. He's really popular in the comic book field, so I guess now kids know who he is from the Danzig record.

RIP: How was the concept for *Satanica* born?

GD: Well, actually, her mom is having a sex dream and this demon comes through the window and [has sex with her] and then rips her open and leaves her all mangled. Then her blood and the demon's semen drip through a crack in the floor, hit a worm and she grows from this worm, which is based on the old thing that, you know, these demons or Satan, or whoever was a worm. So, then she springs up and she doesn't know what she is, who she is; she's freaking out. She looks over in the corner and there's this rotting corpse with flies all over it, you know, what's left of this woman. She puts her fingers in the blood and as soon as she smells it, she gets cognition of the whole scene. She bounds out the window and that's how her first tale, which is about eight or nine pages—in a whole book of all different erotic horror stories—that's how her thing starts.

RIP: You've got a lot going on; what are you most excited about?

GD: The new record and my comic company. And martial arts, my teacher, it's definitely something that changed my life. Before, I'd done different martial arts but mainly Tai boxing. What I'm doing now is definitely the pinnacle. It's called Jeet Kune Do, it's what Bruce Lee created. My teacher is one of Bruce's core students, five guys.

RIP: Let's talk about *Danzig 4p*. Where do songs usually start for you, with a title, a melody?

GD: All different ways. It comes back to this thing that there's no set pattern for anything. If you expect a set pattern, you're deluding yourself. Sometimes I get a piano-line, a guitar-line, a vocal, a title. It's all different. Sometimes it's just a lyric and I make it into a song. It's all different. It's always been like that. Whatever works. Mood is very important. Like I can talk about Clinton in interviews and stuff, but as far as writing a song about him, I don't he's that important. He'll be gone in two years, I think, maybe even less if he keeps...

RIP: Some say the political climate affects

music. There was glam, etc. What do you think makes society's musical tastes change?

GD: That [glam] was a shitty era...

No one wanted to change and the record companies tried to hold it back as long as they could, but what happened I guess, was a lot of people started getting inside the industry, and this is a classic example of how to change things. Of course, if it could happen in the government, it'd be great, but it never will happen. People get inside. What happened is small labels started selling a lot of records; found different chains of selling things. It's a little different than the government, you know, a record company. So what happened was eventually the big guys at the record companies decided that they would make money off this stuff that people were making money off of already. Basically it was, 'Hey, you know what? Our artists aren't selling what they used to and these kids are making a lot of money selling this stuff. So we'll keep this stuff going.' Like scum-bag radio, which is still around, it was, 'buy into these little labels or start our own little labels and make them look indie, and we'll just make money off that too.' Like Nirvana was their way to capitalize on punk music. Well, it wasn't punk music. It was nothing like punk music. It's just some record company guy's idea of punk music more than ten years down the line, 15, 20 years down the line. It's just that they figured out how to make money off of it, how to market it, how to give it a uniform so kids could go out and buy the clothes, and buy the music, and buy the record. You know?

RIP: So why was "Mother" so much more successful the second time around?

GD: Well, they were really scared of it when it first came out. Not the public; record company people, radio—I'm sure we were blacklisted on lots of different stations and we still are to this day. Basically people just think it's a Satanist band.

RIP: People are still afraid of you?

GD: Yes. There are still stations, to this day, that refuse to play 'Mother' or any stuff by us at all. It's just stupid-

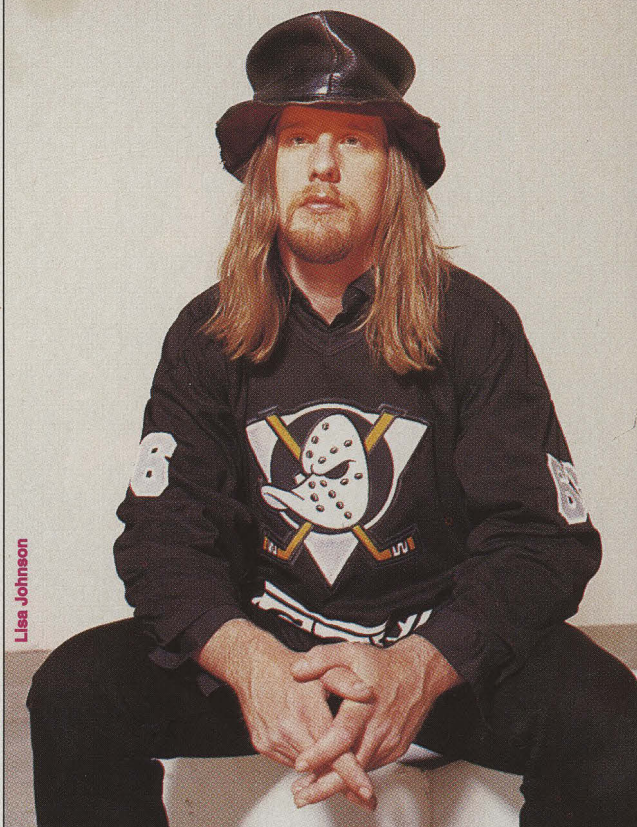
ity. I mean legally, I guess we could do something about it. If somebody said, 'This person is a Satanist and you can't play their record,' that would be like me saying, 'This person is a Christian and you can't play their record.' That's a court case right there. Basically you can sue them for prejudice, segregation, whatever.

RIP: So, do you really hate the term 'politically correct'?

GD: Sure do. I'm definitely not politically correct and I hope I never am because if I'm ever politically correct, then I won't have anything to say. [Laughs]. Nah, it's just I know I'll never be politically correct because there's always somebody trying to spearhead some stupid bandwagon.

RIP: You're in the mixing stages now, so I haven't heard everything off the new album yet, though what I heard so far was great...

GD: Let me see what's on here... "Brand New God," "Little Whip," "Until You Call On The Dark," "I Don't Mind The Pain," "Let It Be Captured," "Stalker Song."



Lisa Johnson

Geez, there's a whole bunch of them I'm leaving out. "Going Down To Die," which I think we're gonna give to the Oliver Stone people for [the movie] *Natural Born Killers*.

RIP: What was 'Going Down To Die' written about originally?

GD: It's about knowing you're gonna die and dying. Use your imagination. There's lots of different ways. You can get your head run over by a car. You can have somebody come up to you and stab you.

RIP: Right, but you said something about 'knowing you were going to die.' Generally, if you get hit by a car you don't know you're about to die.

GD: No, that's not true. Some people know they're going to die. They sense it and they *do* die. I've known when other people are going to die and they died.

RIP: Really?



Lisa Johnson

GD: Within a day or two. Usually when I shake their hands or look in their face and I see something. I don't know. I've analyzed it very little, but it's happened a lot in my life.

RIP: So much has been made of your dark image. Are you a happy person?

GD: Yeah, pretty much. Yeah. I mean sometimes I'm not happy, but most of the time I'm pretty happy or content. You know how I scream—not scream, but basically...

RIP: Rant?

GD: Well, venting my displeasure with the government or whatever. But it will never change and no matter who goes in—even if it's good for five or six years or whatever—it still is the government. That will never change. So it's kind of like me doing whatever I can. I mean, is the answer getting guns and trying to take over the government? I don't think so. 'Cause then that

government will be corrupt too.

RIP: What do you think about bands who sing about political topics, like Rage Against the Machine? Do you think that politics and music should be bedfellows?

GD: Sometimes no, sometimes yes. If that's all you sing about then it's...you know what I mean. I want more than that from a band, but I'm not saying that they shouldn't, and sometimes it's cool. Clearly the American Indians got screwed over. Wars have been waged since the beginning of time. Lands were taken from all different peoples. Africans were guilty of that also, taking other people's land. Everybody was guilty of it. From the Chinese to the Japanese to the Germans, you name it. It happened to the Germans too. That's what all the German wars were about. From Bismarck all the way back to World War II, they wanted back all their land. You know Israel did that, taking the

land from the Palestinians who had lived there for 400 years. I remember back when I was a kid they wanted to put up this complex which is now called the Meadowlands out in New Jersey. And this lady didn't want to leave her house. She said 'I like it. This is my house. I'm staying here.' She's this old lady. They ran over her. She stayed in front of her house and the bulldozer just ran her over and killed her and that was it. End of story. They never got sued, nothing happened. It happened and it happens all the time everywhere. It's just that it's not widely printed...unless someone makes a big stink out of it and that's actually what Rage is doing with Leonard Peltier. It's kinda cool. They're very dedicated so let them have fun.

RIP: Anything political on your record? How would you say it differs from other albums?

GD: It's definitely different. I'm sure a lot of people were expecting us to just do another version of 'Mother,' because of the success. You kind of asked me this question before and I didn't answer the rest of the question. I think someone put it best [by saying]: 'this band stayed together long enough for people to catch up with it.' The previous bands I was in always either broke up or... Samhain turned into Danzig, and people were just starting to understand that. Now this band has been together six, going on seven years. So the live 'Mother' started getting some airplay, and radio guys were calling up Mark [Di Dia] over at American [Recordings] and saying 'You should re-release 'Mother.' I think people have a different idea of Danzig, they're a lot more popular now than they were back then and I think you'll find they'll play it now.' It happened on radio first. MTV only played the record after it was top five radio all over the country. And they *had* to play it. They didn't really want to play it. They had to. Now they're kinda happy they did. They liked the response and things have changed; there are a lot of new people at MTV, and we got some support there from people who just came in, which is kinda cool.

RIP: At RIP we get a lot of letters, half of them are like "Thank God Danzig finally got recognition." The other half were "What a sellout, man."

GD: Here's what I have to say... 'Mother' is six, going on seven years old, how can you call us a sellout? It's the same song. It's bullshit. There are a lot of people who feel that when a band gets popular, it's not *their* band anymore all of a sudden. It's a very childish, infantile attitude. Whereas if you really like the band it doesn't matter whether they're being played or not. A lot of these people just want to keep it an underground music. Which isn't fair to the artists at all.

RIP: When you said that this record was different, was that a result of some kind of a conscious decision?

GD: No. It's basically what we do, every record [we] change it up. We'll still stay Danzig and we just experiment with what is Danzig. I know what Danzig is and I know just how far I can go this direction and that direction and still stay Danzig. You always stay true to yourself; to thine own self be true, you'll never go wrong. So it doesn't matter if we're accepted or we're not accepted. As long as I'm true to myself and I do what I do, I'm being true to the people that buy the records too. If someone doesn't think I'm being true because our video gets played on MTV, they're an asshole and I don't need them around anyway. I can't deal with that again, carrying that bullshit baggage around...good riddance. •