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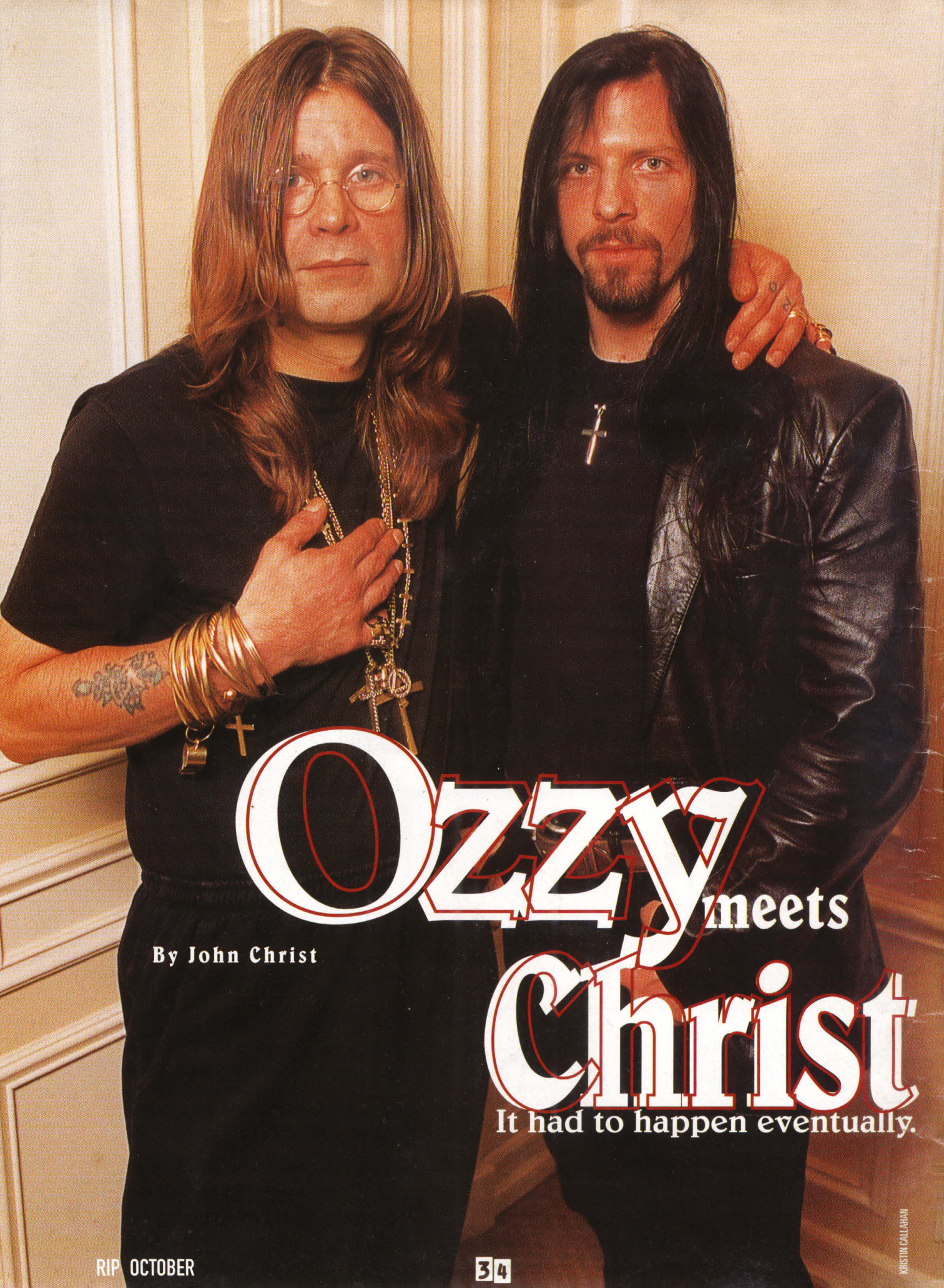
The haunting adventures of

# Marilyn nson

DISPLAY UNTIL OCTOBER 23, 1995







# Ozzy meets

By John Christ

# Christ

It had to happen eventually.



*As the jet went into a nosedive and the oxygen masks deployed, I lurched awake and realized I'd just had a nightmare. I scanned the darkness with a sick feeling in my stomach that I had overslept. The glowing red numbers reassured my burning eyes that I was up early and still in my Orlando hotel room. The Danzig tour ended here last night at a club called "The Edge." Today was the big day. I would finally get to interview a real rock 'n' roll phenomenon and legend, Ozzy Osbourne.*

*Three hours later I was in a New York City hotel elevator with RIP photographer Kristin Callahan and Ozzy's gold-hearted assistant, Tony Dennis. Until then I'd been too tired and busy to be anxious. But there I was, standing outside Ozzy Osbourne's hotel room, nervous as a high school senior about to take a final exam. Suddenly, the door opened and there he was. Gulp. I was struck by the contrast between his casual black sweats and work boots coupled with enough gold chains and jewelry to take a serious chunk out of the federal deficit! This was Ozzy! We yakked all afternoon to the accompaniment of his jangling jewelry, car horns and occasional sirens emanating from the busy Manhattan street below. A very open Ozzy talked about his new record, Ozzmosis, Black Sabbath, drugs and everything under the New York sky. Picture if you will; the voice of Black Sabbath meets the guitarist named Christ.*



KEVIN ESTRADA

**JOHN CHRIST:** Do you have a basic philosophy?

**OZZY OSBOURNE:** I think that if I'm always advising you about what you should be doing, I'm not looking at me. Not one of us is perfect. If I were to drop dead now, I've had an incredible, blessed life.

**JC:** Do you love life?

**OO:** I was born afraid. I'm a very insecure person. People say to me, "Then how can you get onstage and perform the way you do?" The reason why I do what I do is it's the way I attack my worst fear head on. I have terrible stage fright every night. I'm extremely superstitious. I can't stand the number 13. I can't stand peacocks. Anything that I can grasp hold of to make me feel better, because I've only got a voice, you know.

**JC:** When was the first time you grabbed a mic?

**OO:** The first time I grabbed a mic was when I was about 18 or 19. I've got to psych myself up before I go on. When you go onstage and your f!king voice goes out, you want to say, "Beam me up, Scotty, quick!" A lot of people have this misconception of Ozzy Osbourne as being a carefree f!king hell-raising lunatic. But underneath it all lies a very frightened person.

**JC:** Tell me about the infamous Ozzy/Motley Crue tour.

**OO:** I remember saying to Doc McGhee [manager], "Someone's gonna' f!king die on this tour." Tommy Lee, I don't know how the guy does it. He would get f!ked up out of his mind and get on that kit as if he had nothing wrong the night before. And I would be thinking, *Oh my god, I can't wait for the last f!king song.* At that point, I realized that I've gotta do something about it. As a performer, if I can't wait for the last number, that is not performing. That's cheating.

**JC:** It's surviving.

**OO:** It was the beginning of the end of my drinking. I haven't drunk now for four years. I've gotta be really careful with myself. I'm a full-blown addict in the full sense.

**JC:** Do you believe in God or a deity?

**OO:** As my life's going on, I do believe that there is a power greater than myself. I have to, because of the things I've put myself through. I am not and have never been a Satanist. I have written and sung about Satanic things. But I have also written and sung about environmental things and about relationships. Coming from Black Sabbath, they just think I sleep upside-down in a rafter in a castle in Bavaria somewhere. It gets very tiring. We did sing about Satanic things! The reason why was we were young kids. And for us the world wasn't barrels of flowers



and f!king hippies living in a shithole in Birmingham, England, where you never see the sun and you're dying of smog inhalation.

**JC: Who was your favorite band growing up?**

**OO:** I'm a major Beatles fan. If any significant thing turned me on to music, it was the Beatles. The Beatles sucked me in for the simple reason that they came from Liverpool, which is approximately 60 miles north of where I was raised. I thought, *This is my escape route. This is the only way out.*

**JC: What was the first concert you went to?**

**OO:** I think it was John Mayall's Bluesbreakers in Birmingham.

**JC: Were people going crazy?**

**OO:** They just used to smoke dope and be cool because it was just blues. I used to hang around in a lot of soul clubs and pop Dexedrine and uppers all night. Then we discovered "The Powder." [Ozzy starts singing "ah la."]

**JC: With whom did you first partake of the evil substance?**

**OO:** The first person to turn me on to cocaine was Leslie West. We were opening up for Mountain in 1972 or '73. When I tried it, I was forever trying to get there again. There shouldn't be a problem left in the world because I sorted them all out with that f!king bullshit powder. There are three things that have f!ked up more bands than anything else; they are drugs, alcohol, and women.

## The Osbourne Legacy: No rest for the wicked

*John Christ throws out song and album titles to the Oz-man, and he replies off the top of his head....*



**"Iron Man"**

[Black Sabbath, *Paranoid*]—

"Iron Man" is quite possibly one of the all-time heavy riffs. Every guitar player that I ever speak to wants to learn "Iron Man." It takes me back to when I was a young, rebellious, angry kid. It's like a comic to me now.

**"Never Say Die"**

[Black Sabbath, *Never Say Die*]—

"Never Say Die" is very sad because the album *Never Say Die* is the last record I did with Black Sabbath. There's a song on there called "Junior's Eyes." It was about my father dying. My father's name is John Osbourne, and mine is John Jr. It's about me saying good-bye to my father. And it was the end of Sabbath for me. And it was the only album that I ever made that never went gold.

**Technical Ecstasy**

[Black Sabbath]—

It was the beginning of the end. At that point in the Sabbath era we were desperately trying to get away from this black magic shit. We tried to get clever. One very enjoyable thing about Sabbath was that we weren't restricted. We would try all kinds of different things. They hadn't invented the phrase "Heavy Metal" then. I hate that term or any other because it restricts you. We were trying to get away from the darkness, and they kept trying to drag us back. That's been the story of my life.

**"Fairies Wear Boots"**

[Black Sabbath, *Paranoid*]—

Acid. LSD. We were tripping when we wrote it. We were just taking a lot of LSD then.

**Vol. 4**

[Black Sabbath]—

I can't remember much of it. In actual fact the album was going to be called *Snowblind*. And if you look on the inside cover, you'll see: "We'd like to thank the Los Angeles Coke Cola Company." The reason why it became *Vol. 4* was because the record company said they didn't want to call it *Snowblind* because it was implying the use of cocaine. We'd gone through somewhere in the region of 30,000 dollars of cocaine in the making of that album.

**"Crazy Train"**

[Ozzy Osbourne, *Blizzard Of Oz*]—

The launch pad of Ozzy. That was the launch pad of another amazing adventure in my life.

**"Good-bye To Romance"**

[Ozzy Osbourne, *Blizzard Of Oz*]—

Randy had come to England. And I kept walking around the house humming this song [hums melody to "Good-bye to Romance"] and he goes, "Where have I heard that song before?" I said that it was just a melody that I've had. He says, "Sit down and we'll work it out." I've got all of these melodies in my head that I couldn't get out because I didn't know how. He was the first guy to help me, and it was f!king phenomenal. Bob Daisley [ex-Rainbow bass player] and I sat down and wrote the lyrics. And it was like, *f!kin' ell, I've done it!* I wasn't wrong after all, even if it didn't sell.

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JC: There you have it, folks. I hear the new album, *Ozzmosis*, is the first album you've written and recorded sober.

OO: Yes. When I stopped touring for the last album, I said, "It's over." I went home and did nothing [musically] for a year. I just found myself. I was a father and a husband. Once I bought all the toys and whatever, I thought, *Now what? What the f!k does Ozzy Osbourne do? What does a rock and roller do when you stop?* There is no f!king retirement home. Eventually I told Sharon [Ozzy's manager and wife] that I wanted to get back into it again. Zakk [Wylde] was doing his own thing with Pride & Glory. I thought that I'd just work with some writers.

JC: Who did you work with?

OO: I worked with Tommy Shaw, Jack Blades, Jim Vallence and Steve Vai. I'm a co-writer with the band, and I write with a lyricist. I have to, because I don't play an instrument. I suddenly discovered that working with professional writers is a totally different and better way of doing it. When you go with a band, you spend the first four hours talking about how many beers [they drank] and chicks they f!ked the night before. You do your time, go home, and you've wasted money. So I went to Vancouver and wrote three or four songs with Jim Vallence. I also wrote a lot of stuff with a guy named Mark Hudson. I've come full circle. I wrote some quite melodic songs, but then it's still a very heavy album. I've never had so much of an arsenal of songs in my life!

JC: I'll ask the age-old question: How do you feel now about the Sabbath legacy?

OO: To be honest, it was an unconscious thing. It's a great gift to have. But when someone asks you 20 years later, "How did you write what you wrote?" You just go, "Well, I took a load of white powder and went in to the studio." We got ripped off. Do you know, just last week I finally started getting royalties from Sabbath?

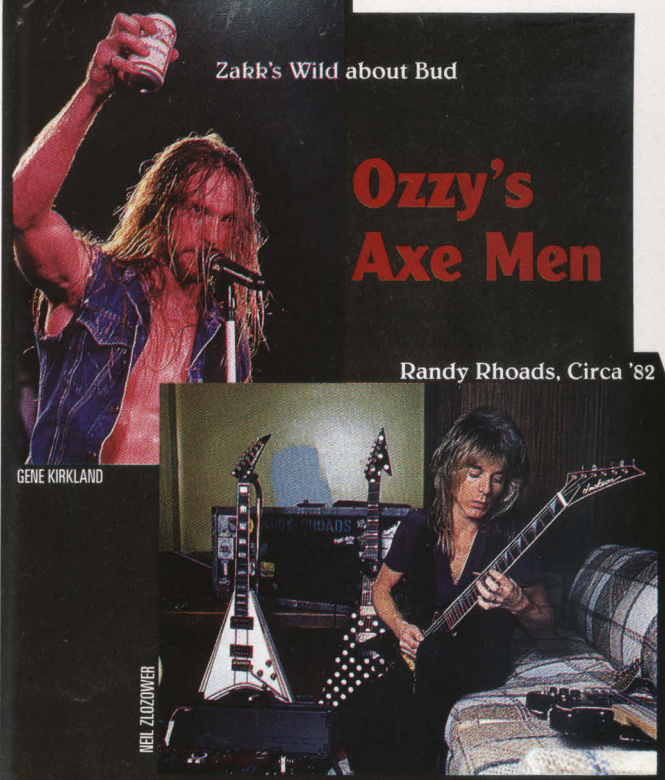
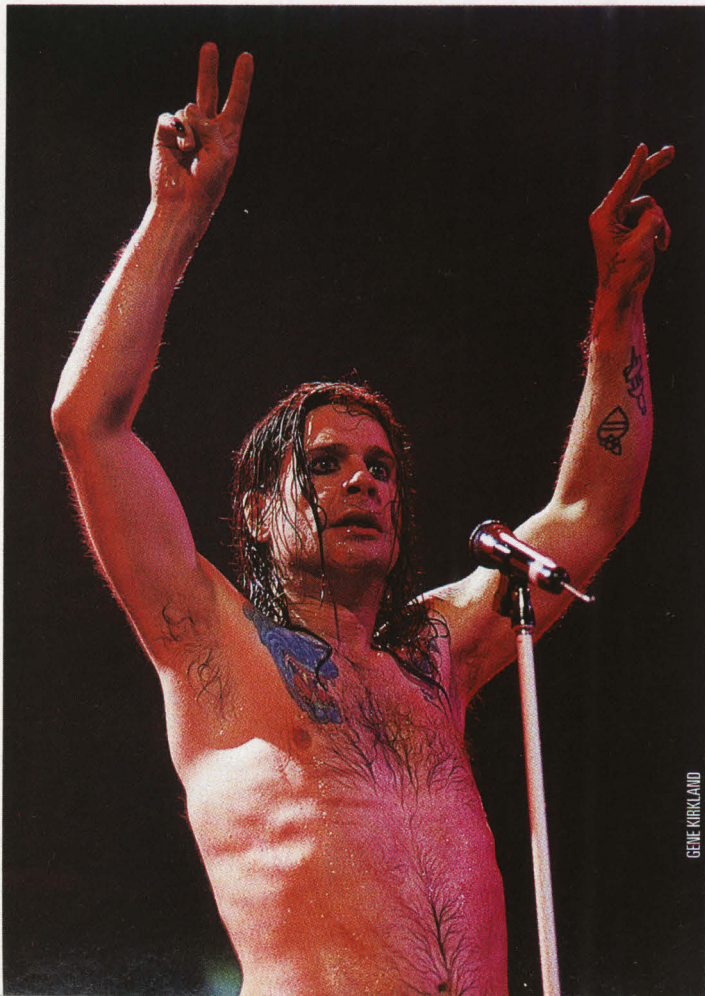
JC: How many years has it been?

OO: 26 years.

JC: How did you get started? What was your dream?

OO: I wanted to be a Beatle. I wanted to be a rock star. If you ask me, "What

continued on pg. 93



Zakk's Wild about Bud

## Ozzy's Axe Men

Randy Rhoads, Circa '82

*New Ozzy guitarist Joe Holmes has a lot to live up to. Ozzy's had some amazing guitarists backing him during his solo career—including the extremely talented and much-missed Randy Rhoads. As an exceptional guitar player himself, John Christ quizzed Ozzy on his choices....*

**JOHN CHRIST: Where did you find Randy Rhoads?**

**OZZY OSBOURNE:** I found him through a guy named Dana Strum [of Slaughter]. That guy is like a stockbroker. Randy was like a breath of fresh air. I was stoned out of my mind down at Dana's studio when he brought him in. I thought I was hallucinating, when this awesome sound came out of this little box and this little guy. Before he died, he was coming down to soundchecks and f!king around with a totally new approach to guitar. I always had this eerie feeling that he was too good for this place. God took him away from us before he had a chance to perfect this revolutionary concept. I loved the guy, and not a day goes by that I don't think about him. I always do and will send him flowers on the anniversary of his death.

**JC: What did you think of Brad Gillis?**

**OO:** Brad Gillis wasn't for Ozzy Osbourne. But to Brad Gillis, I am forever in his debt. He came along in one of the saddest moments of my life and kept me alive. When Randy got blown up [in a plane crash], I remember standing outside the tour bus with this inferno sitting in front of me. And I said to Sharon, "It's over." Brad came along cold from Night Ranger and played the licks. I take my hat off to him. If it wasn't for Brad Gillis, I suppose I would have thrown in the towel and gone home.

**JC: What happened with Zakk?**

**OO:** Zakk is Zakk. I had no other alternative but to let him go at the end. I asked him if he was going to do the tour or not. No answer. In the end I said, "Hey man, let me know by the end of the day." He never called back, so I sent him a fax the following day.

**JC: That was it?**

**OO:** I value his friendship. I wish him the best. But I've got to move on.



advice can you give me?" it's the fact that if you have a dream, never let go of your dream.

**JC: Did you ever compare yourself to those guys and think, "Wow, I'll never be that good?"**

OO: It's a hard question for me to answer without sounding like a dick. Every one of us wants to be like the next Led Zeppelin, or the next Rolling Stones. I don't know why, at the age of 46, I'm still in it. I'm not knocking it. I mean, if it was that easy, everybody in the street would do it.

**JC: How did Sabbath start off?**

OO: We started off as a jazz/blues band called Earth. Originally we had a saxophone player, a bottle neck guitar player, Tony Iommi, Geezer Butler, Bill Ward and myself. I remember that we were rehearsing in this community center. Across the road was a movie house. And there was a horror film on. Tony said, "Don't you find it weird that people pay money to get the shit frightened out of them? Why don't we try and do scary music?" We decided to write "black magic" this and that. Then we wrote "Black Sabbath." I have a postcard somewhere at home that I'd written to my mother while on a ferry to Germany. I said, "Mom, we've changed the name from Earth to Black Sabbath. Maybe this will be the big change in my life." It was.

**JC: Where did you record the first Black Sabbath record?**

OO: I remember that we got into the van, drove down to London and went into a recording studio called Regent. We worked on two four-track machines, recorded the first Black Sabbath album in 12 hours, got back in the van and went to Switzerland for six weeks.

**JC: So you guys started on a small scale.**

OO: We used to go and hang around clubs with our van and hope that the bands didn't show up. If the band didn't turn up then we'd jump up on stage. I remember being in a club and thinking, *I've got a pair of shoes on my feet. I've got a package of cigarettes. And I can afford to buy a beer. This is great!* Then Jim Simpson, our manager at the time, walks up to me and tells me that our album has just entered the British charts at number 14. We couldn't f!king believe this.

**JC: What about Paranoid?**

OO: Then we recorded *Paranoid* and decided as a band to hire new management. The album was originally called *War Pigs*. When we were in Island Recording Studios in London, the guy said we need three minutes to finish the album. So we just jammed out this song "Paranoid." It just came.

**JC: You just started with the main lick?**

OO: Yeah. And Geezer wrote me some lyrics and they just put it out. The f!king single just shot up

the charts. The album cover had been printed and everything. They changed the album title from *War Pigs* to *Paranoid*. The cover doesn't make sense, but that's what happened.

**JC: Which records were the most fun to record?**

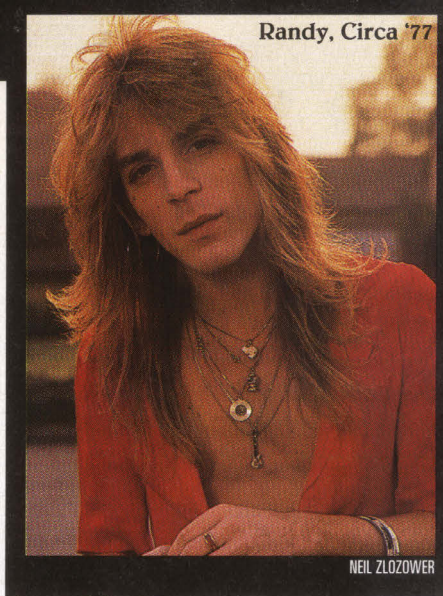
OO: The first two Sabbath, and the first two Ozzy albums were a lot of fun because nobody gives a f!k. As soon as you start getting successful, everyone starts advising you. We'd gone from this manager to that manager, and built a studio and all of this shit. Instead of all sitting around and saying, "Look, it was a nice dream, but let's call it a day." In the end, they fired me.

**JC: What was the turning point?**

OO: I kind of wanted to do a solo album. Tony said that we are a band, and if you have any songs, you should submit them to the band. I said, "Okay, what do you think about this?" [Iommi said:] "Don't like it." [Ozzy said:] "This?" [Iommi said:] "Don't like it." I was very musically frustrated. It could have worked, but we were all drunk and f!ked up on drugs.

**JC: So next you began your solo career.**


OO: I had the *Blizzard of Oz* idea for my first solo record. It was a lot of fun because we had nothing to lose, and everything to gain. I've been very fortunate. To make it in one band, and then to jump off and become something else on your

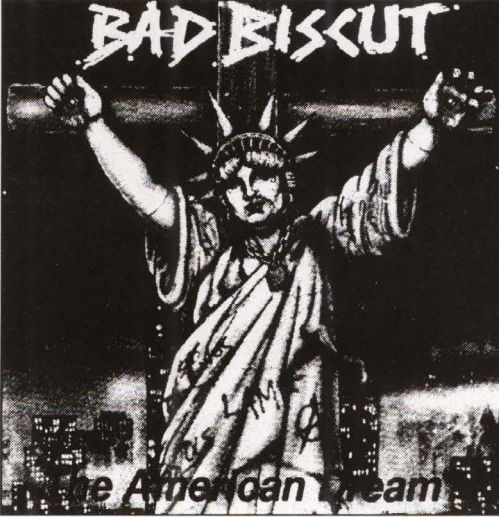


NEIL ZLOZOWER

own thing is so gratifying. All I can say to anybody is that if you have an idea, and you think it's a good idea, you're f!king stupid if you don't at least try it. I've looked over my shoulder and thought, "F!kin' 'ell, what a life."

(At press time, Ozzy Osbourne's touring lineup for *Ozzmosis* included: bassist Geezer Butler [ex-Black Sabbath], drummer Deen Castronovo [ex-Bad English] and guitarist Joe Holmes [former Randy Rhoads student and ex-Lizzy Borden].—Ed.)•

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