

Let's get Physical Knightshade Box On

Out for the Count, The Physical You . . . current contenders in the heavyweight league are Knightshade. With two hard-hitting EPs under their belt, a nationwide tour with the Angels completed, and a new live album, things have never looked or sounded better for this Hamilton rock group.

Before their second Angels' show at the Galaxy, Knightshade's singer Wayne Elliot shares his whiskey and his thoughts. "We're almost a professional support band now," he says. "It's more the record company's idea, to get more people to see us."

Knightshade have supported many overseas acts, from Deep Purple to Stryper, and have had varying experiences doing so. "I swear I'll never treat a support band like we've been treated sometimes," says Elliot. "The Angels have been the best treatment we've had so far. We respect other musicians no matter how good or bad they are — we're all in the same boat. If we all pull

together the industry's got to get better instead of, y'know 'We're better than them, they're better than us.' That's why quite often [if double-billed] we'll go on first. We don't really care where we go in a performance. If we're good we'll stand out and people will remember us no matter what playing order we are."

Knightshade have been going six years now, though Elliot has been the only constant member in that time. "Each new person we add to the group adds more professionalism and everyone's got their act together. Our guitarists Rik and Gavin are very compatible, they work in excellently. The other guy we had, Paul, was excellent too, his

personality and to get on with on the road. He's just a real cruiser, but he cruised a bit too much, he never practised and his musical tastes were heavier than what ours were too.

"Our music is becoming softer but it's not intentional. It's just when we're writing we concentrate on getting the songs more melodic and something more danceable to a wider range of people, cos if we don't we gonna starve. We have to work jobs as well, we don't take any wages or anything out of the band. All the money goes straight back into the records and things like that. We've paid for everything so far. This is the first year we've actually got some record company help — it makes a difference."

Blood & Money

Reaction is the label that got this quintet on vinyl. "Glyn Tucker has actually paid for studio time, helped on production, things like that, out of his own pocket. It was unheard of before from our point of view. Playing our sort of music you've got to work twice as hard and be twice as good as anyone else, cos it's not mainstream — you haven't got that selling potential."

Do you think metal is becoming more popular in New Zealand, though?

"I hate the term metal, it's so derogatory. There are so many con-



Knightshade (L-R): Rik Bernards, Jon Bell, Gavin Lind, Wayne Elliot, Alan Grady.

notations to it, you know, you get this thump, thump headbanger bloody image and it's not that. You get some of the best musicians in the world playing heavy metal and you can't get this through to people. To be tight playing heavy metal is 10 times harder than being tight playing a real trendy easy beat.

"The hard rock core isn't getting any better, we're not getting any more followers, they've just got more stauncher. Quite often I've seen people that have travelled from one end of the island to the other to come and see us for a weekend. There's no other type of music that would have fans like that."

What did you think of National MP Graham Lee's comments on metal?

"A person that is that closed-minded I can only say I'd hate to have him in a position of power over any people because that was the most bigoted one-sided opinion I've ever heard. I'd like to sit down and have a chat to the guy, but I don't think he'd be able to handle it. He'd want to get rid of me like a pimple out of his face, cos he just doesn't

stand for anybody else's opinion. They shouldn't have even put that interview on TV. I don't see what use it did anybody except making him look a complete idiot."

Knightshade are now at the stage where they only perform original songs. "I'd sooner have 10 people applauding for the band's song than a cover of somebody else's and having a thousand people out there screaming more, more."

Warp Factor

Songwriting duties are shared equally among the band. Are the songs written from personal experiences?

"Yes, a lot of them, with a bit of humour. I'm a great believer in humour. I don't get depressed and think about some relationship I had in the past that didn't work out. With 'Out for the Count' boxing was something I could bring in to it. It's just my warped humour. I just hope other people pick up on it! 'Blood and Money' is like a slightly political musician's anthem looking at the world and saying you're getting on with making your dollar and not

giving a stuff who you hurt along the way, whereas we're down the bottom of the ladder."

It was great to see *Our World* presenter Gael Ludlow helping Knightshade out on backing vocals for the *RWP* special, but it appears that was a one-off performance.

"She's pretty busy with her own TV things and that, so we were just lucky she was available to do it that night. I'd quite enjoy her on the road with us. It would be good — keep the boys a bit quiet."

Ludlow does all the main harmonies on both EPs; live, bassist Jon Bell does them. Over the next three months Knightshade plan to write some new material and do a video for 'The Physical You,' but their big goal is to get to the States. "We all want to go," says Elliot, "we just need a sponsor for the initial promotion. I'm sure we could make them money."

But it seems most important to the band is their fans. "We appreciate all the people that have followed and supported us over the years. Without them we'd be nothing."

Geoff Dunn



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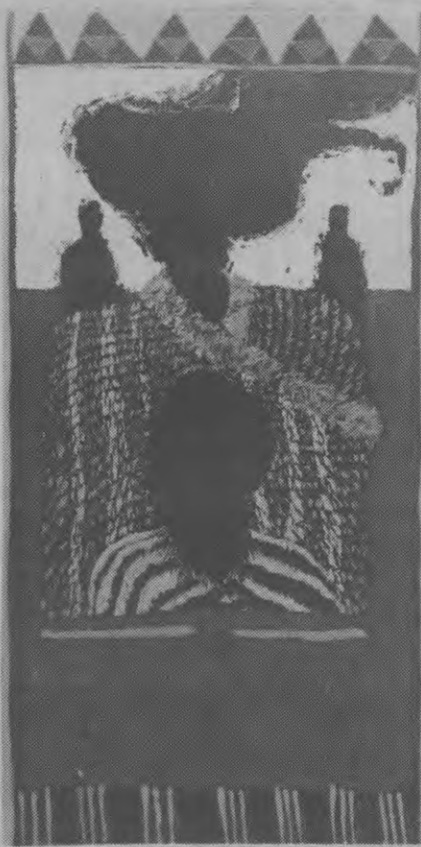
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