

MAROON 5 ★ ARCADE FIRE ★ WILCO

rollingstone.com
Issue 1027
May 31, 2007 >> \$4.50

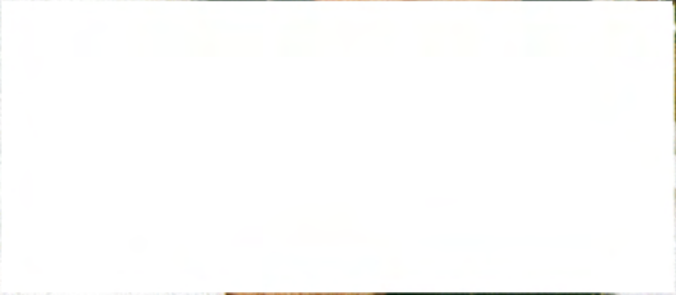
Rolling Stone



**ALL FLIPPER
NO GIPPER
.....
GOP'S PATHETIC
CANDIDATES**

**KEITH RICHARDS
& JOHNNY DEPP**

**BLOOD
BROTHERS**



[16 | CD PREVIEW]

Macca Returns

McCartney reflects on his life with "very personal" new disc.



[24 | HOT FESTIVAL]

Coachella Report

Rage, Chili Peppers kick out the jams. Plus: 2007's coolest fests.



[36 | THE Q&A]

Adam Levine

The Maroon 5 frontman loves his vintage Benz and Billy Joel.

Rock & Roll

Tour of Duty: Bands Go to Iraq

On the road with the young acts the military books for the scariest gigs on Earth BY EVAN SERPICK



ETHAN ISAAC RETURNED from his first tour in Iraq in 2005. The twenty-nine-year-old, from Madison, Wisconsin, traveled to far-flung posts in Balad, Tikrit and Ramadi, and faced enemy fire almost every day. Last year, he left for a second deployment, this time to Afghanistan. Isaac isn't a soldier. He's the frontman for New York hard-rock band Edison, who were recruited by the military to play for American troops stationed in some of the world's most dangerous places. "I remember doing a combat landing going into a base outside Tall Afar [in northwest Iraq]," says Isaac. "The plane is shaking, you can't see anything — there are no windows — we've got Kevlar on, helmets on our heads, and we are strapped in wearing jumpsuits. Our guitarist turns to me and says, 'What the hell did you get me involved in?'"

In past wars, the USO has famously shipped American entertainers like Bob Hope and Wayne Newton overseas to give the troops

Clockwise from above: New York rockers Edison; Baltimore's Niki Barr Band in Afghanistan; Chicago's Hello Dave toured Iraq in 2004.

a taste of home. But while the civilian-led USO still does send celebs abroad — Kid Rock and Toby Keith have both played in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone — it's had trouble getting A-listers to soldiers in the remote outposts where more



of them are now serving. Armed Forces Entertainment, a division of the Air Force that has planned smaller-scale events for the military since its creation in 1951, has increasingly picked up the slack. "There's more operating bases, and now troops are

staying out much longer than they used to," says AFE director Lt. Col. Tamara Moes. "We have to work at recruiting the right entertainers, because it's kind of scary. You're not in the city, you're out in the dust."

About a dozen bands have toured Iraq with AFE in the last few years, including rockers like Edison and Baltimore's Niki Barr Band, country acts including Carly Goodwin and even the occasional R&B act such as the Fuzz Band. AFE scours local clubs, sol-

its demo CDs, scans MySpace and, this year, for the second time, set up a booth at the music industry's biggest conference, South by Southwest in Austin, Texas. "We had fifty scouts hitting the streets, and it was incredible," Moes says of SXSW, noting that the recruiters wore civilian clothes this year, after their uniforms seemed to scare people off in 2006. She says dozens of bands expressed interest during the conference and suggests that the effort might yield ten to twelve tours.

Bands recruited by AFE receive no pay, only travel expenses and a modest per diem. In exchange, they travel from base to base in Black Hawk helicopters and C-130 cargo planes, playing shows almost every night, in tents, mess halls and outside, in the sand, to crowds ranging from 20 to 2,000. The reward, they say, is the incredible response they

on rollingstone.com

Guitars, tanks, helicopters and more: Watch video documenting Edison's travels in war-torn Iraq at rollingstone.com/edison

Manson's Bloody Fantasy

Marilyn Manson has unveiled his kinky short film for "Heart-Shaped Glasses," the first single from his upcoming epic, *Eat Me, Drink Me* (out June 5th). "It's a very *True Romance*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Badlands* sort of story," says Manson, who stars in the video with his girlfriend, actress Evan Rachel Wood. In the film, Manson and Wood wreck a 1967 Corvette and get it on while the sky rains blood. "It goes from the very realistic to a twisted inner vision, and will probably be viewed as sick by some people in its extent of eroticism," Manson says. After the shoot in downtown Los Angeles, the couple checked into a hotel to wash up, much to the dismay of its employees. "It looked as if we just fornicated in a thunderstorm of blood," Manson says. "Oh, wait. We did."

Manson's new video stars real-life girlfriend Evan Rachel Wood.



get from the troops, some of whom haven't been home in more than a year. "You get a very immediate personal reaction, sometimes tearful and emotional," says Edison guitarist Jonathan Svec, who had strong doubts about the Bush administration's war policy – and an even stronger fear of flying – but says he's glad his bandmates pushed him to do it. "It was probably the best experience I've had in my life," adds Isaac.

Charlie Robison, a touring musician who's married to the Dixie Chicks' Emily Robison, recently did an Iraq tour with AFE and says his shows there were unlike any others he's ever played. "There's medevac helicopters coming in, you're seeing explosions happen a couple of miles away all the time, and lots of mortars," says Robison, who played six shows at six different bases over ten days, tailoring his sets to appeal to the troops (a cover of Jackson Browne's ode to masturbation, "Rosie," went over well). He wasn't sure what

"There's medevac copters coming in, you see explosions all the time."

kind of reception he would get as a result of his association with the Dixie Chicks. "There was a certain amount of anxiety," says the forty-two-year-old singer, who has also been critical of the war. "The first base I went to, somebody came up and said, 'Hey, who's married to a Dixie Chick?' I thought, 'Aw, shit.' He said, 'Man, I love them – tell them I love 'em,' and that's how it was."

Like several of the musicians who visited troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, Robison says his feelings about the war changed while he was there. "I spent from six o'clock in the morning until two o'clock in the morning hanging out with guys that have been on patrol all day and all night, who lost guys that day," he says. "It definitely has given me a lot to think about, that it's not as simple as I thought it was." Niki Barr, who fronts the Niki Barr Band and has relatives in the military, said she was also deeply affected by the group's recent twenty-five-day tour of U.S. bases in the Middle East. "It has definitely made me more patriotic to go over there and see these guys," she says. "Politics aside, they're just serving."

[Q&A]

Linkin Park's New Direction

Frontman Mike Shinoda on working with Rick Rubin and dissing Bush on *Minutes to Midnight* BY AUSTIN SCAGGS



LP's Shinoda (left) and Bennington onstage

DURING THE MAKING OF *Minutes to Midnight*, the members of Linkin Park (and co-producer Rick Rubin) routinely transformed themselves into a seven-person jury. Every musical note and every lyric was voted on, and if the jury didn't reach a unanimous verdict, the work was either scrapped or retooled. "We all have drastically different tastes," says co-frontman Mike Shinoda, who shares a production credit. "If any one of us doesn't like something, that's a percentage of our fans who might not like it." After eighteen months of in-studio yeas and nays, LP have created their most dynamic album yet. Shinoda checked in to give us the lowdown on the new disc and on this summer's Projekt Revolution tour.

How different is *Minutes to Midnight* from your other records?
It sounds like Linkin Park, but it's so different that it will take people a beat to go, "I can't believe that this is the same band." Hopefully, their next thought is "Fuckin' cool!" The lyrics have many layers, but every time we make a song, we want it to be exciting on the first listen and have enough substance that the hundredth listen still has something new to discover.

The consecutive songs "Hands Held High" and "No More Sorrow" are a serious one-two punch against the policies of the Bush administration.

"Hands Held High" was a fun one to write. Some people have called it political, but I'd just call it aware. I watch TV, I read the news, that's just what's going on out there. I hope you can appreciate the care we took with the words. They are intended to stay open-ended. An American who listens to the song can relate it to what's going on here. But we also have fans all over the world who can read it different ways. Our lead guitarist, Brad [Delson], is Jewish, and he could relate certain things to the situation in Israel. So the song is versatile.

Then again, on "Hands Held High" you call out someone who "stutters and mumbles for nightly news to replay." Bush!

Yeah. I know it feels like I'm dancing around the issue, but as artists we can only get the song to a certain point. What finishes the song is the listener, who connects their life experiences with the music. And situations everywhere are a little more similar than you'd guess.

***Minutes to Midnight* was such a democratic process. That sounds like a recipe for arguments.**

There was a ton of friendly fighting on this record. To give you an example, I convinced Chester [Bennington] to open the door and let the other guys critique our vocals and lyrics. So we gave the guys the

lyrics, and the four of them, and Rick, sat downstairs in the studio and picked apart every single word. That evening, they presented us with what they didn't like, and the list was long. Chester and I were furious for two days. By the third day, we'd gotten over it.

I heard you had trouble coming up with the record title.

For two or three months, we could not come up with a title to save our lives. When Chester brought in *Minutes to Midnight*, it just felt right. It's not just about the doomsday clock – it could be taken as very optimistic. It's a schizophrenic record, so we wanted a name that could be interpreted in many different ways.

"What I've Done," the first single, is the sixth song on the album, where the lyrics seem to turn from desperation to empowerment.

Cool! This record has a lot of great songs, but it's more important to us that people take the record in as a whole, or else you don't get to experience the whole journey. With "What I've Done," the challenge was to write a song that would sum up everywhere we've been since *Meteora*.

You've got a pretty sick lineup set for this summer's Projekt Revolution tour.

It's the best show we've ever put together: us, My Chemical Romance, Taking Back Sunday, Placebo, HIM, Julien-K, Saosin, the Bled, Styles of Beyond and Madina Lake. If I was out there looking for one show to buy tickets to, that'd be it

[laughs]. And I get to see it all summer.

Has it been fun rehearsing the new material?

I love it. For a couple of songs,

I'm a one-man band. On "Little Things Give You Away," which is one of the best songs we've ever written, I play acoustic and electric guitars and keys, and sing backup vocals.

Would you like to comment on Brad's ever-growing beard?

It's amazing! We decided he's totally not allowed to cut his beard and hair. We actually voted on it.

HOT LIST

ROLLING STONE EDITORS' FAVORITE ALBUMS, SINGLES AND VIDEOS

1 THE WHITE STRIPES "Icky Thump"

Jack and Meg return with their heaviest, most Zeppelined-out tune since their 1999 debut. It's got everything you could ask for – ominous cave-stomp drums, monster riffs, banshee vocals and a wiggled-out solo courtesy of an ancient synthesizer. Consider yourself rocked.

2 THE NATIONAL "Mistaken for Strangers" video

Who's down for an indie-rock slumber party? These dudes! In this charming low-budget clip, the shaggy Brooklyn quintet crams into a tiny bedroom to jump on the bed and rock out to the hypnotic Joy Division-y blast of their new single. Boys!

3 COMMON "The People"

Backed by Kanye West's hot soul samples and dreamy keys, Common dedicates his rhymes to "the people on the low end" and gives big ups to Nemo – kinda like a six-year-old socialist with killer flow.

4 BONDE DO ROLE "Office Boy" video

Did a bunch of sex-crazed Brazilians ever storm your office and start playing crazy-catchy party tunes that sound like Fatboy Slim jamming with T. Rex? No? This clip is exactly what that would be like.

5 THE CRIMEA *Secrets of the Witching Hour*

If downloading music for free off the Internet makes you guilty, this is the album for you. The Brit-pop band – which sounds like a more rocking Bright Eyes – is giving away its new album on the Web (thecrimea.net). Bargain!

"Some people have called *Minutes to Midnight* political. I just call it aware."