

the wisdom of Vincent Evans

certainly wish opportunites like that would arise to overthrow governments.

Dave: Because of your image, the band's image, you get a lot of questions about whether you're homosexual. What are your views on sexuality?

Vincent: We're still suffering from the remnants of the Victorian era. On a cultural level the mass still wishes to think it's doing something wrong when it has sex.

I personally have had sexual experiences covering the entire... (cough) spectrum. I haven't tried bestiality yet. I haven't had sex with children. What offends me most sexually is not the practices but the attitudes and pretense surrounding them. Camp really bothers me. You should read *The Naked Civil Servant* by Quentin Crisp. To answer the question that didn't quite get asked, as far as I know nobody in our band is homosexual. It wouldn't bother me if they were. I know not of the band members' previous experiences.

Some of the questionable notions about Office's sexuality have arisen from our clothing and usage of make-up.

It comes down to straight theatre. Nobody accuses Richard Burton of being homosexual

"It's been said that religion originally came from hallucinogenic experiences"

Dave: What are your views on religion?
Vincent: I personally have no traditional religious belief. God is an entity who exists everywhere and is capable of many different forms. I adhere to basic principles, I don't make a practice of stealing, I have never killed anyone and hope I never have to.

At the same time I can probably rationalize the desire to kill someone out of sheer curiosity. There's definitely a dark side of "me," of my "psyche." I have had an interest in the occult since I was young. I'm very interested in ceremonial magick (with a "k").

I have a great deal of contempt for organized religion. It bothers me that people are willing to accept other people's values without trying to formulate their own. The song "No Idea" expresses my contempt for evangelism. What evangelists do changes the respect people ought to have for the Bible. I enjoyed reading it. There are very useful parts in it.

I don't think evangelists believe what they say. Ronald Reagan does—that's why he's dangerous. As described in my song "On the Bombsight," it is very possible that one fanatical person is going to push the button (one is all it takes). Alexander Haig fits that description. Anyone who thinks Ron Reagan makes the decisions is crazy. If you're buddies with the President of GM, you make damn sure you don't make a decision that's to his detriment. President Nixon probably never has to pay for meals in restaurants. He's responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of inno-

cent people, and he can get millions of dollars for doing a television interview. It's insane.

It's been said that religion originally came from hallucinogenic experiences. I'm inclined to believe that.

Dave: Do you think there will be a nuclear war?

Vincent: If so, I don't think it will be the large-scale one that everyone's predicting. Our generation's been fed this idea, we've been told stories from day one. We want a war.

Dave: Do you want to talk about your philosophy of music and the technical side of your songs?

Vincent: By and large people have a very restricted, limited concept of what constitutes a song. We are trying to break that down. We have a song on our new album called *Eine Kleine Kristallnacht* about Munich in 1939 when the brownshirts of the Nazi party broke the windows of stores owned by Jewish shopkeepers. We're heavily opposed to the mentality that creates those kinds of situations. We're primarily against the imposition of one will on others.

The music is violent for that song, it builds tension. It's not the kind of thing you sit down and relax to—we're not trying to do that. I've been known to wield a knife on stage (a large knife) and have quite a frightening effect on people. I like to make people think that any minute I could walk offstage and rip someone open from top to bottom and spill their guts all over the place. And then I like to put the knife down and let them know that fear was all inside their heads.

I like to shake people up. Indifference bothers me a great deal. I'm highly self-critical, but I don't think it's necessary to show off my self-criticism. I like to offend people, but it disturbs me that I like to offend people. I find other people very interesting. I'm not a megalomaniac. I am egoistical, I study and analyse my ego, but I'm not egoistical.

A lot of music I listen to would be considered weird or uncomfortable or strange by a lot of people. I tend to listen to combinations of music of a progressive nature which I like with a lyrical sentiment I can relate to. I like witticism. I like lyrics that contribute to the meaning of the song. I'd love to have the power of speech of Anthony Burgess.

"I like to make people think that any minute I could walk offstage and rip someone open"

Office wants people to have an experience when they come to a concert. We try to visually enhance or interpret the music. If you're going to punch, punch with brass knuckles instead of just a fist.

I'd like to transform people. Musicians can condense emotions that may occur over a period of years into a few minutes. If anyone ever discovers time travel, it'll be a musician.

We use a lot of electronic devices like synthesizers and people say, "Oh, that's a load of crap."

Dave: People complain that it's all sterile and mechanical?

Vincent: That's ridiculous. Anything human beings are capable of is natural. We'd use synthesizers a lot more if we could afford better ones.

"If you're going to punch, punch with brass knuckles"

A synthesizer is very important because it allows you to be vague. I would prefer to use sounds that it's kind of hard to pinpoint exactly. The same with the lyrics. Lately we're gone in the direction of just providing enough information so you get an impression.

Now, as I get back to *Kristallnacht*, certain people may misinterpret it as fascist because it has all sorts of violence. That's understandable. But in context, if they were to catch the subjects of the other songs, they wouldn't think so. For instance, we've got a song that's a vague description of child abuse. If we were fascists, we wouldn't write a song that's basically against child abuse.

We choose the sounds of the instruments to enhance the meaning of the lyrics. In "On the Bombsight" the guitar is meant to sound like squadrons of aeroplanes. In "Kristallnacht" (which means "Night of Glass" in English) we try and make guitars sound like broken glass, crunching feet on broken glass.

The imagery is very important. If you were listening to a very sordid tale of some

act of indecency you're not really paying attention to the music, yet it is still affecting you. If that music is enhancing what's being said and you're perceptive you can watch a more colourful picture.

If we use violent imagery it's because we live in a violent age. Even in the act of watching television, when a commercial comes on it's a violent interruption. A song can be like a rollercoaster, or like a hundred-mile walking race.

I prefer to think not of entertaining an audience, but of subjecting them to it. I'd like to lock all the doors and make them hear it. However, maybe we can give them something that makes them want to sit through it even if it's uncomfortable and disturbing.

Everyone has a certain degree of masochism. I mean, people stand around in riot situations, watching, and in two minutes they find themselves involved.

Dave: You mentioned that you keep a journal of interesting ideas that help you in your songwriting?

"If we were fascists, we wouldn't write a song that's basically against child abuse"

Vincent: I write down descriptions, comments, quotes from literature and compile them with numbers. Then I just write the numbers into place as I write songs, and end up with pages of material. By eliminating the non-essential I get songs I like that are very concise.

I don't use this as my only method of songwriting. Sometimes I sit down, and a

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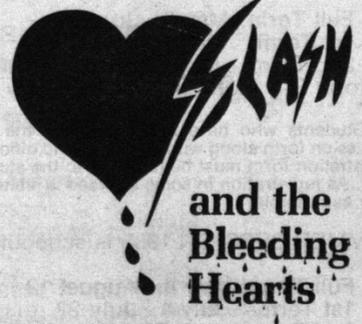
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Tickets are available from the SUB Box Office (2nd Floor SUB) and various club members.

NOTE: These events are open only to U of A students, staff, and guests. Absolutely no minors admitted!