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INTERVIEW

by Knut Lode

'Pillowheads'—have changed the way this continent rears its young. A new kind of quasisexual entropy has infiltrated the psychostructure of an entire generation, a cultural phenomenon not seen since the domination of the "Post" company's hammerlock of cereal advertisements. Our crispy comrade says he wishes he could touch each fan privately, but of course his bigness doesn't permit it. He tells me later: "People just put me in a cage with rabid dingos. The fans ultimately gotta peel their own papaya. I've given blood every year."

Here in front of Crispin, after we've retired to his sumptuous suite in the Endorphin, amidst the snowy peaks, it's easy to imagine him as blood and hair. He's just one of the boys, a gump-savant. Puffing pyrrhically on a redolent Bolivian dogstick, shimmering sonorously in his famous solar zoot-suit, he could be anyone's dad, until we start discussing his meteoric rise to the top of the rock apogee.

Eradicator, Crispin's first band, were the true definition of punk frisson, with their thermodynamic rock attack and existentialist immolation. "Back then," Crispin fulminates, "we never even had to exhale." In 1982, Crispin dismantled the band, and formed the nucleus of the Fragrant Pharoahs (now including Tad Burton, Sling Rueben, Chub Manson, and Chilton Harvey). The band became instant avatars of the teenage zeitgeist, largely because of the novelty of being the most fantastically ugly band in the world. The lyrical thrust of Crispin's worldview had changed dramatically from the urban angst of Eradicator ("She's a duck strokin' / dirty jokin' / gump guggler / she's a thumb grinding / never minding / sister lover") to a more wretched epiphany ("With weeping eyes / I lament the blows of fortune.") His non-acoustic policy ensured the barest minimum of technical error in performance, culminating in what he calls his Darwinian phase. In performance, the notes of his voice trigger samples of animal noises, in an

orchestra of zoomorphic zealotry that has hornswoogled the composure of today's rock scene. Crispin's former career as an astral saboteur for various international concerns has clearly benefitted his quest to become the biggest, thickest, ugliest rocker the rock cognoscenti have ever reified.

The first hint of Crispin's enormity was 1987's "sleep deprivation" concept album, "Cosmolingus", a challenging work of art that met with surprising commercial approval. But last year's "Master plan" album met with a degree of public scorn; Crispin says he was aiming for a sort of genetic reunification incorporating bunji rhythms and cardboard boxes for a ill-conceived attempt at the ultimate "Worldbeat" symbiotic experience. "Masterplan" confused most punters with its backward-masked "13 Commandments" section, where the Pharoah's let loose with a punk philosophy that defies most of Newton's laws. But now he's back in the saddle again with "Back to the Womb", and an audience with Rolling Stoned.

R.S. - *Everybody wants to know, Crispin, how have you managed to "stay punk"?*

Crispin - "Been there, done that, you know? What I do is, every year on my birthday, I hire a person to break my nose, and what I want to . . ."

R.S. - *You hire people to punch you in the nose?*

Crispin - "No, no, not punching, just to apply and even pressure until the nose cracks. Y'know, we play "punk" because we truly believe, that's what we do. Until you die. It's better than saving bottlecaps!"

R.S. - *None of your albums have been released on C.D.*

Crispin - "There you go - it's the same fuckers putting flouride in the water! They've got information on those discs that is subliminally released when you play them - olfactory information released by the disc drive. Tell me anybody really knows what's happening inside those boxes. They look like medical apparatus,

y'know?"

R.S. - *Your interest in olfactory manipulation goes back to your early days as a metaphysical mutineer. I understand the Fragrant Pharoahs had to pass some kind of whiff-test.*

Crispin - "What can I tell you? My feats of flatulence are legendary. The Smithsonian has an archival recording of my Rectal Passages. I have awesome control over the pitch, tone, timbre, volume and duration of my piquant pronouncements. They call me the Sphincter Songster, star of stage and screen. Girls go crazy about my resonant rectal reflections. I'm am anal anarchist, I subvert from within. I guess I'm just a hunka hunka burnin' love."

R.S. - *You've been criticized in the past for your highly unconventional political beliefs.*

Crispin - "I just want the world to drain the fluids from out of my body."

R.S. - *Well, in "Drowning the Colossus" you accuse mankind of a fundamental lack of compassion in our recidivist society, yet "Radio Free Hiawatha" suggests that rebirth is negotiable.*

Crispin - "Verily, our music seeks to love, and loves to love. It all goes back to the cabals and cults involved in the birth of rock 'n' roll, and equally the genetic histories of everybody we've known in our lives. We just say: don't rule out the possibility that we're all just plants, moss or loam; you name it. The people that I've worked with on my records, my friends and lovers, it's very clear to me that we are all of the lowest order. It's very exciting! Meanwhile, I've got lands to conquer, bridges to burn, worlds to discover, lessons to learn, kingdoms to govern, plots to devise, babes to deliver, you know how time flies.

R.S. - *One final question. . .*

Crispin - "It is better to know the questions than the answers."

R.S. - *There's this matter of your legendary lubricity. . .*

Crispin - "Amen. The omnipresent process of sex, as it is woven into our bodies, is the pattern of all the processes of our lives. Dudely, Dude."