

# SEX TATTOOS & ROCK N' ROLL

PREMIERE ISSUE

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**STEVE JONES'  
VICIOUS SKIN**



# Blind Melon

By Jef Hickey

Photos by Eric Stickler

Picture yourself on a warm summer afternoon, hanging out with your friends on a wide open field. Above is the crystal blue sky, underfoot is a healthy pastel green grass. There is plenty of food and the drink flows freely. Laughter fills the air. There's not even a hint of negativity—just lots of love and companionship. All you would need to complete this beautiful day are righteous tunes. But who would compose the soundtrack for this wonderful scenario? Blind Melon would, my friend.

Even though Blind Melon is on the cusp of stardom and there are no signs of tapering off, Shannon Hoon, vocalist and master of friendly smiles, is as humble as can be when talking about life, his music, and his tattoos—humble but guarded. “I got these tattoos during different phases of my life,” he said. “They have more meaning for me than I can tell you. You would get a diluted version. It's more inside than outside.

“My family split up when I was seventeen,” Hoon said. “Before, we were what I thought was a strong unit as a family. I then had to become accustomed to not having that. I got a tattoo after four or five years of having to go to Christmas dinners just to be with my immediate family. We all got together for Christmas, so I had to mark that occasion.”

The artists who have helped Shannon and the rest of Blind Melon memorialize events that have shaped and molded the young lads include Rockwood Rick from Sunset Tattoo, Rick at Purple Panther and their homeboy from Lafayette, Indiana, Dave Sucer. Dave is currently working on Shannon's not-yet-ready-for-prime-time-viewing back piece—a school of fish. Hoon also longs for a piece called “The Healer,” after a painting by Betty LeDuke.

No matter how depressing the condition of the world or how bad the newspaper news, Blind Melon tries to live always in summer days under clear skies. They strive for care-free, unconditional love with the tolerance of individuality, both in the music they play and in the day-to-day living that inspires art and song. Happy days are here again.

Peace.



