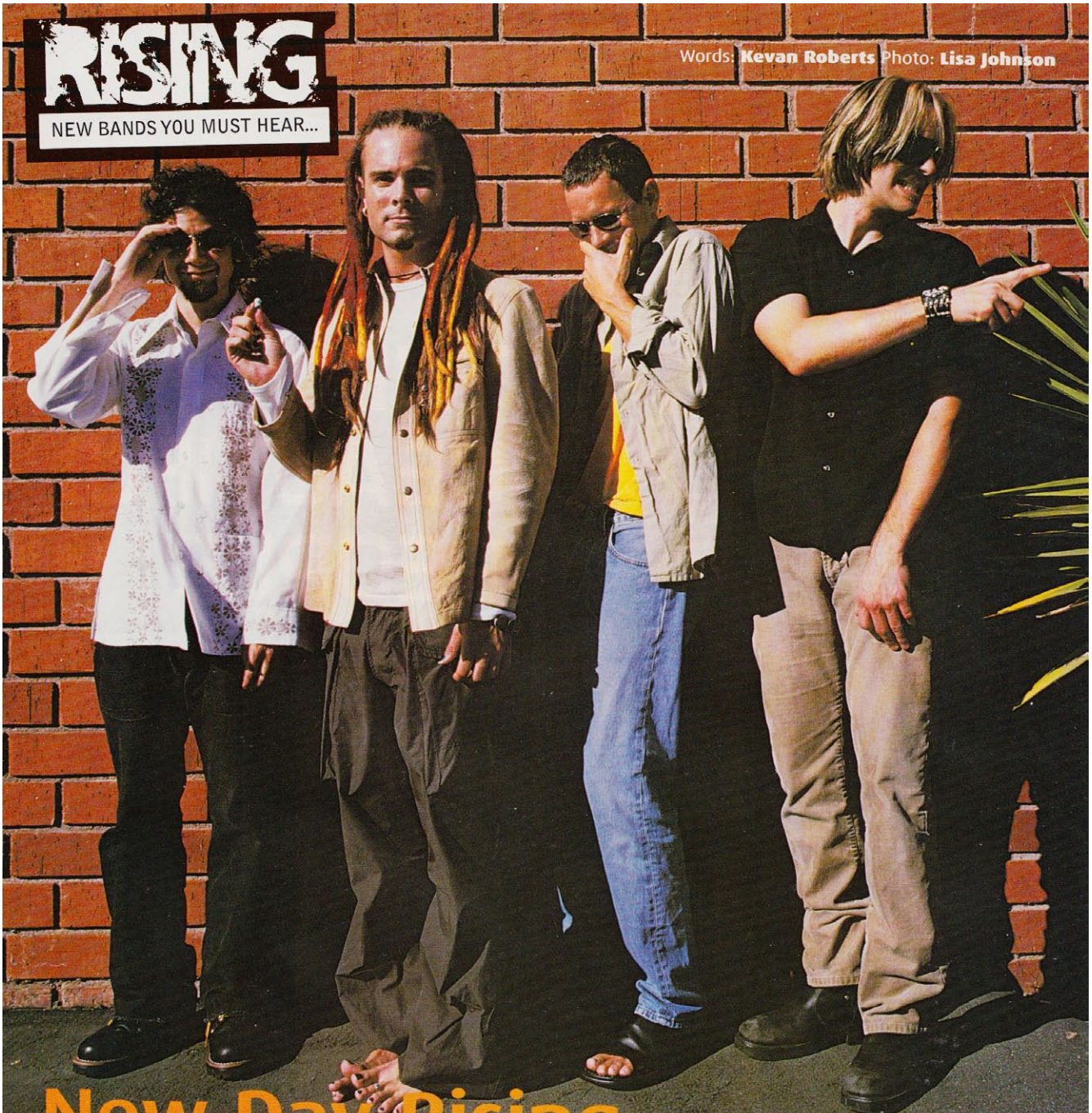


RISING

NEW BANDS YOU MUST HEAR...

Words: **Kevan Roberts** Photo: **Lisa Johnson**



New Day Rising

After Blind Melon's Shannon Hoon died, his bandmates went to ground. Five years on, they're back with **UNIFIED THEORY...**

"THERE WAS a time right after Shannon died when we put out ads for a new singer, but every time we got in a room together to try out someone, it always felt like someone was missing, which he was. It never felt right."

Christopher Thorn, former Blind Melon guitarist, sighs as he recalls his former band's attempts to fill the void left following the tragic death of singer Shannon Hoon in 1995. After giving up on the idea of finding a replacement for Hoon, Thorn and bassist Brad Smith relocated to Seattle and began producing a string of local acts.

"I was hiding out and producing records, just to build up my chops," recalls Thorn. "When I heard Chris singing for a band called Celia Green, I was completely floored. It inspired me to want to be in a band again."

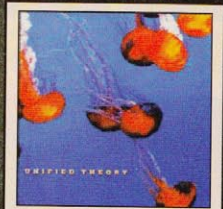
THE DREADLOCKED Chris Shinn – originally from Vancouver – admits he was wary of following in Hoon's footsteps.

"My initial thought was that they were looking for a singer, and to continue as Blind Melon and that was something I was not at all interested in," he says. "I had no intention of being known as the guy trying to fill Shannon's shoes. I wanted to start from scratch."

Shinn flew to Seattle to hook up with Smith, Thorn and former Pearl Jam drummer Dave Krusen. In their first two days together, the quartet recorded several songs, which would eventually form the basis of their self-titled debut album. By turns gentle, soaring and uplifting, 'Unified Theory' doesn't so much pick up where Blind Melon left off as follow its own blissful path.

"We don't fit in one single bit, but I don't care," says Thorn gleefully. "And you know," he adds, draping his arm round Shinn's shoulders, "I don't care if we sell records because we've made a great album and I've made a great new friend. And that's what it's all about." ●

Out now



'UNIFIED THEORY'
album out now on 3.33/Capricorn

Unified Theory (left to right):
Christopher Thorn, Chris Shinn, Dave Krusen, Brad Smith