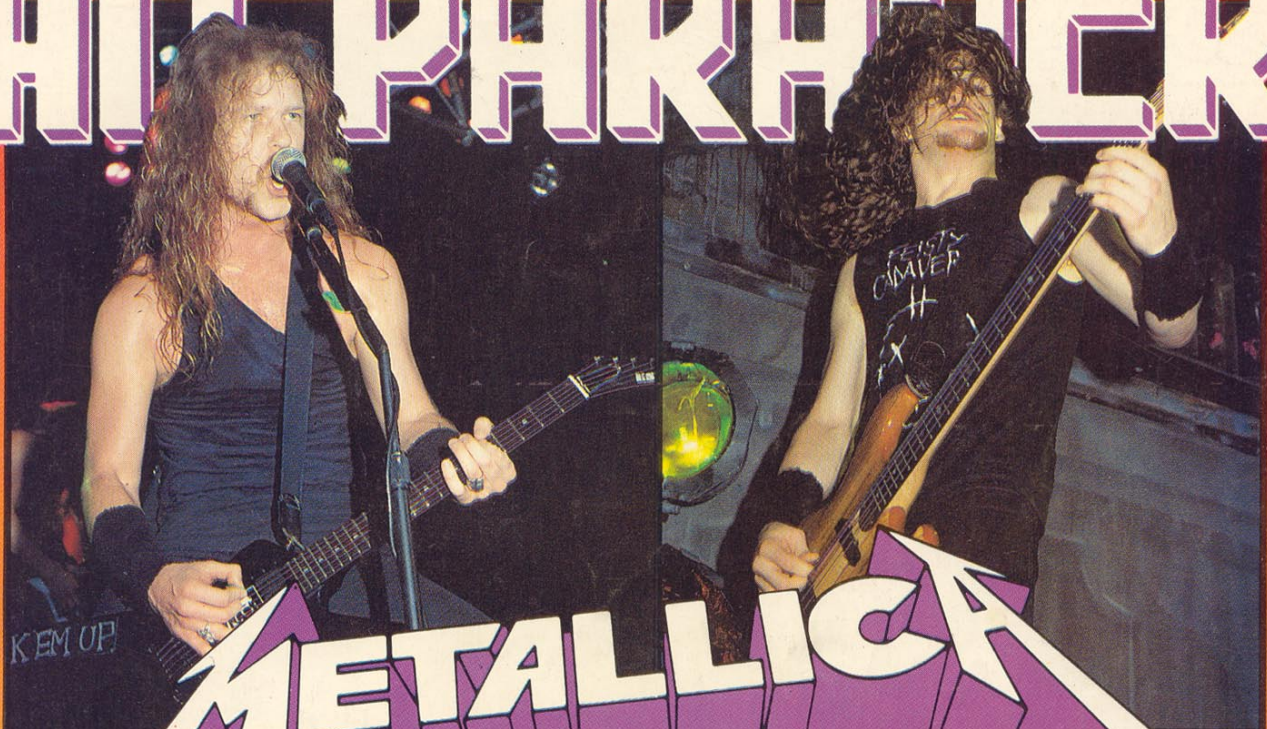


PEARL JAM CENTERFOLD

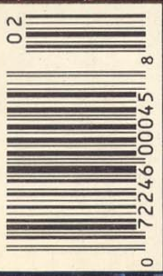
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HIT PARADER



METALLICA

LIVE AT LAST!



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FEB 1994 \$3.95/E2.50UK

The members of Blind Melon believe the true power of their band lies in the fact that they're five guys functioning as one. Recently guitarists Christopher Thorn and Roger Stevens, bassist Brad Smith, drummer Glen Graham, and singer Shannon Hoon all got together to talk about music and their platinum selling self-titled debut.

Hit Parader: Can you remember one of your earliest exciting musical experiences?

Shannon Hoon: Pink Floyd. I got the whole catalog after I started listening to them. And Carole King's *Tapestry* brings back a lot of memories. I remember my Mom cleaning house to that.

Rogers Stevens: I remember hearing *Band On The Run* by Paul McCartney and Wings, and it was one of my earliest memories of really getting into music when I was really young.

Christopher Thorn: Oh God! *Zeppelin III* with all the acoustic

BLIND

about uninhibited. That's how he expresses himself. So anything where I feel somebody is being totally uninhibited and letting loose and not worrying about the commercial aspect of things, is what really turns me on. Where they're following what they really know how to express the best, which is themselves. The first listening experiences I had were like that. I was like, "God, man! Those guys are just going off!"

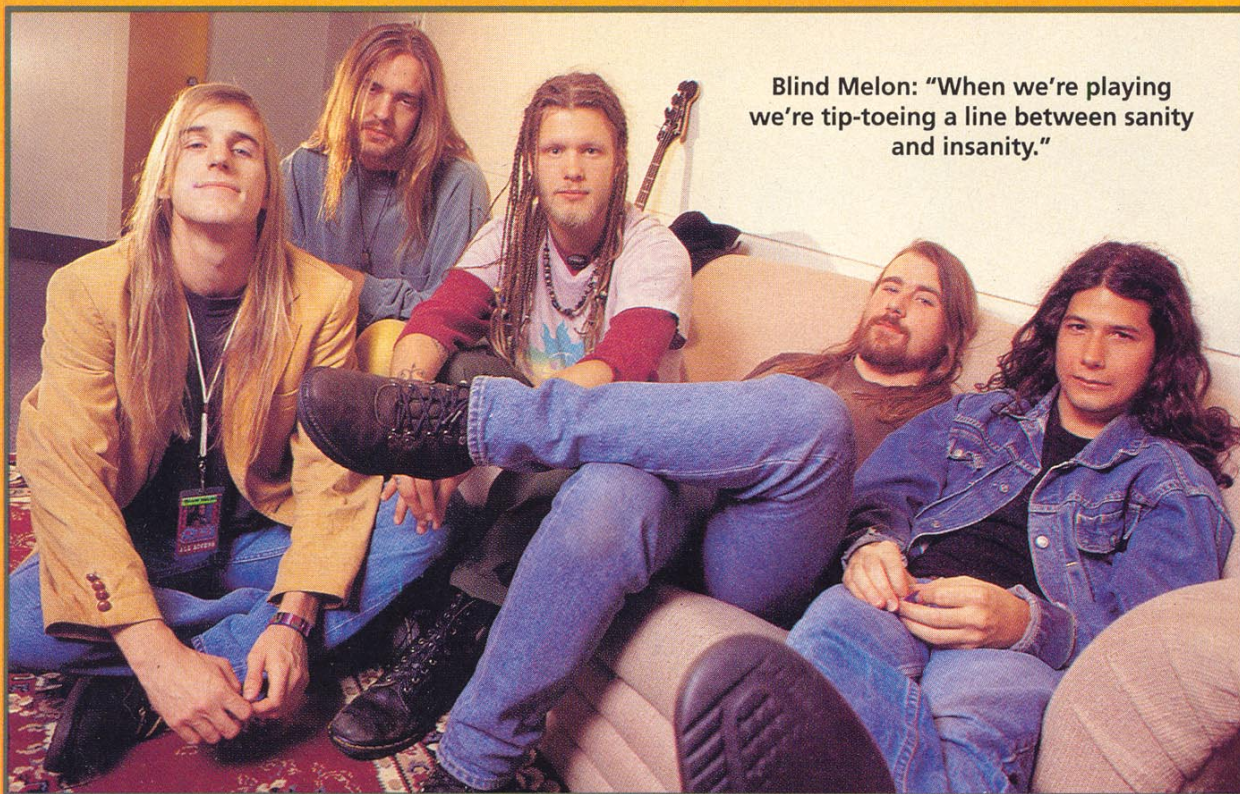
Glen Graham: Maybe Elton John and *Benny & The Jets*. Then I was hit heavily by Kiss. Kiss just overwhelmed me. It wasn't really so much that they blew me

thing special about the production. It sounded like it would have sounded if you were right there listening to them. They used effects, but interesting ones.

HP: The tones have a very late '60s and early '70s sound, but there are definitely contemporary influences and sounds at play.

RS: Yeah, well, we have the 20 years of music that came after those earlier periods to back it all up. We have all of the influences from the music that we listened to from the '60s and the '70s, plus you have the whole advent of heavy metal and hard rock, which we listened to when we were young.

"I like songs that take your head away, mind-tripping things."



Blind Melon: "When we're playing we're tip-toeing a line between sanity and insanity."

PHOTO: JOE GIRON/PHOTOFEATURES

songs. *Gallows Pole* and all that stuff. I was just so incredibly turned on. Then one or two years later, one night I got stoned and listened to the Beatles *White Album*. It was on vinyl and all scratchy and had all the pops on it. I put that on and I couldn't even speak for a week afterwards. It just blew my mind.

Brad Smith: When I listened to James Brown for the first time. Or Led Zeppelin. And Crosby, Stills Nash & Young. The music and styles might be different but I'm talking

away musically, but it was the whole concept of the thing. I was into monster movies and films. Then to see these guys playing rock music! It was great. I thought, "I want to do this!" so that went on for way too long. But I really started pinpointing things and figuring out exactly what it was about things that I liked when I got into Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, Cream, Traffic, CSN & Y, and all that. I was moved by a lot of that kind of music. A lot of it was just good songs, but there was some-

SH: Whether you wanted it or not.

RS: Yeah, I mean you listened to hard rock bands when you were a kid because that's how you learned to play guitar. Those guys played guitar physically well, so you get all that. Then you have all the alternative music that came in the '80s or whatever, and you hear all that stuff. That totally influences you, as well. But as far as the sounds and stuff, all of us play through the same gear that was used back then, anyway. the amps and the drums and every-

MELON LIFE ON TOP

BY MIKE PRESSMAN

thing are old simply because we think the tones sound better.

SH: They're a lot meatier.

RS: We play contemporary songs, but it's produced, and the tones of things are done in a way that sounds almost vintage. But it still has some weird things on it that make it sound contemporary. It's definitely a blend of the two things.

CT: Personally, it's only due to the fact that everything that I grew up on was a very pure and natural sound. So the only progression for me is to want to have that same sort of sound. Everybody's done that. I mean, everyone is influenced by who they listen to. I just love those pure, dry tones. To me, you can hear everything as well. That's the reason for my guitar tone.

HP: Overall, it gives the record a very intimate feeling.

CT: I think so, too, when it doesn't sound like you're playing in a stadium. Especially vocally and when you're wearing headphones; instead of hearing the voice sound like he's away from you, it sounds like he's right there, right in your ear, singing to you direct. I love that sound. The Beatles had a lot of that.

BS: Nothing sounds forced. Nothing sounds way, way out front. You're able to sit down and get into it because the production is so dry and you can hear everything. Nothing's pushed way out front and everything else is just a support. It's that kind of production, really dry, so reverb doesn't get in the way. Things aren't just awash in the background. You can actually hear everything for a change.

HP: Describe the feeling you get when you're playing.

SH: I feel I'm tip-toeing a line between sanity and insanity. It's just such a rush that you don't know how to control it. Every time you play, the rush is different but the fine line between everything is still there. You never know what you're going to be feeling, one minute to the next.

BS: What gets me off more than anything is the improv thing when we're playing live, when we're just totally moving with the mood. 'Cause after the songs are written, you can recite them over and over, but each time we play them we try to add something different or better. It moves me more when everything's clicking at the same time and I feel that everybody's clicking at the same time and I feel that everybody's on the same wavelength.

CT: That happens to certain degrees when we're writing. As weird as this sounds, sometimes you have an incredible experi-

ence writing a song—and it doesn't happen every time—where it works so easily. Those are the nights when, as corny as this sounds, I just want to walk over and hug and kiss everybody. That's the only way you feel. You just want to do a big, group hug.

BS: It's totally inexplicable sometimes and we don't even really know how it happens, which is funny, because we're constantly searching to get that consistent wavelength

happening again. Everybody's trying to get on that same level again, because things happen so fast when we are on the same wavelength. Some days you go in there and it just doesn't come together, but whenever it does, something really good comes out of it. Christopher's right, it makes you want to just jump up and hug everybody.



PHOTO: MARK WEISS/ANGLES

BLIND

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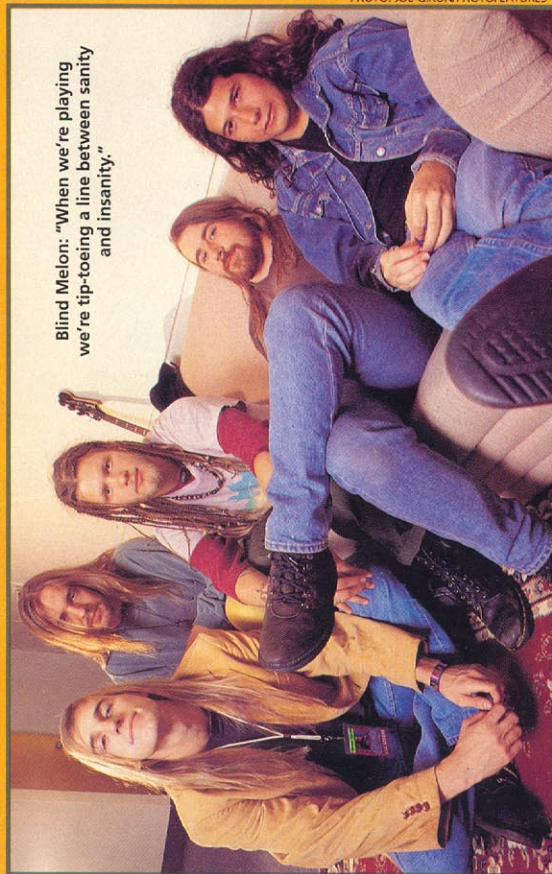


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